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## ENERGY

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As a senior member of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Senator Akaka has been a leader in promoting renewable and alternative energy sources, such as wind, solar, wave, ocean thermal cooling, ethanol, photovoltaic and hydrogen. His energy initiatives have focused on using cleaner and more efficient sources of fuel for the future to alleviate America's and Hawaii's dependence on foreign oil. He has consistently supported budget requests and appropriations for energy sciences and research and development.

Senator Akaka's vision for our nation's energy future resulted in hydrogen and methane hydrates legislation enacted into law. This also resulted in a cutting-edge hydrogen fuel cell project at Hawaii Natural Energy Institute. Working with Senator Inouye, Senator Akaka helped secure \$3 million for the Hydrogen Gateway project in FY 2006.

Senator Akaka is a founding member of the Senate Hydrogen Caucus, which is dedicated to increasing the visibility and knowledge of the hydrogen economy. He introduced the Hydrogen Future Act and is committed to pursuing hydrogen legislation to reauthorize programs that will help the nation move away from dependence on foreign oil. Senator Akaka also introduced the Methane Hydrate Research and Development Reauthorization Act of 2005, which reauthorizes the methane hydrate research and development program through FY 2010.

Senator Akaka's support for ethanol as a renewable source of energy produced \$36 million for demonstration projects to convert sugar cane into ethanol. It has also resulted in a loan guarantee program that will help our state's ethanol manufacturers capitalize their production facilities for sugar cane-to-ethanol at \$50 million per project.

Senator Akaka has been an alternative energy supporter long before it was fashionable to be energy conscious. Since his election to the House of Representatives twenty-seven years ago, he has worked to reduce America's dependence on imported oil and to encourage the use of renewable energy. His predecessor, Senator Spark Matsunaga, created the first formal hydrogen research program in this country, designed to accelerate development of a domestic capability to produce an economically renewable energy source. Senator Akaka's perseverance led to the Matsunaga Hydrogen Act, enacted in 1990 shortly after Senator Matsunaga's death. When Senator Akaka succeeded Senator Matsunaga, he took up the cause of hydrogen and continues to believe that it is one of our best hopes for independence from fossil fuels.

His Hydrogen Future Act of 1996, which followed the Matsunaga Hydrogen Act, expanded the research, development, and demonstration program. It authorized activities leading to production, storage, transformation, and use of hydrogen for industrial, residential, transportation, and utility applications. It has enjoyed bipartisan support in Congress.

Senator Akaka has also recently initiated an effort to team up four agencies – the U.S. Department of Energy, Hawaii Natural Energy Institute, State of Hawaii Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, and Hawaii Energy Policy Forum – to work together to assess Hawaii's dependence on oil and the technical and economic feasibility of oil alternatives. He will continue to work with these agencies to help define an energy agenda beneficial to Hawaii.