HYDROGEN SAFETY, LLC

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Testimony Before HTAC

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Risk Management Strategies for Main Street Use of Hydrogen

Chairman Walker, and Members of the Committee;

My name is Doug Rode and I am the Principal and Managing Director of Hydrogen Safety, LLC, located in East Hartford, CT, which is an engineering consulting firm focused since 2000 on providing risk management strategies for the Main Street use of Hydrogen. Unfortunately I am pinch hitting for my colleague Mr. Michael Pero, who is our Director of Risk Management and is a member of the DOE's Hydrogen Safety Panel. Because his Panel and HTAC share some common goals but probably at different levels of assessment, we want to leave one lasting impression with you.

One can debate that Hydrogen is actually safer than other fuels or that it should not be treated any differently. However, the Hydrogen Industry simply cannot withstand a serious accident without losing the support and confidence of the public and its customers. To achieve full commercialization, a dedicated and consistent approach to risk mitigation is a must.

This conclusion is in concert with the statements in the Secretary of Energy's December 2008 Report to Congress responding to your Committee's Findings and Recommendations. I quote from HTAC Recommendation III.1
"The risks, including technical performance, cost-competitiveness, fueling infrastructure development, market acceptance, and regulatory roadblocks, create the need for government risk-sharing throughout the research, development, and technology deployment timeline and lay the groundwork for the federal role. The DOE responded with a commitment to "provide more discussion of market barriers and consider the government role in overcoming these barriers." The Hydrogen Safety Panel is in fact this past year exploring the issues of the insuring Hydrogen powered vehicles and fueling stations but has yet to reach any final conclusions.

To promote these efforts, we specifically advocate the following:

1. Investigating the establishment of a professional designation for competency under the prescripts of ISO 17024 for granting personal certification. The industry would define the parameters for recognizing an individual's competency with Hydrogen. This is good for the growth of an individual's professional career, good for their employer to showcase to their customers, and earns public

confidence that the people in the industry are judged to be independently competent to do their work. If fish inspectors and other industries are endorsing this professional achievement why should the Hydrogen Industry not be pro-active?

2. Work to establish statutory liability limits for applications of stationary fuel cells, hydrogen vehicles and fueling stations. This will allow for consistent insurance coverage at more competitive pricing and allow reasonable insurance to be offered to all firms in the supply chain.
3. And finally, implement a uniform and consistent expert system to provide recommendations in real time to first responders. As of yesterday, the number of Hydrogen accidents included 140 reported incidents per the DOE's H2incident database. This expert system would supplement the current GPS type data and computer hardware that are being installed in police and fire vehicles in central Connecticut under Homeland Security funding.

Thank you for this opportunity to share with you our recommendations for an effective risk management program.

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