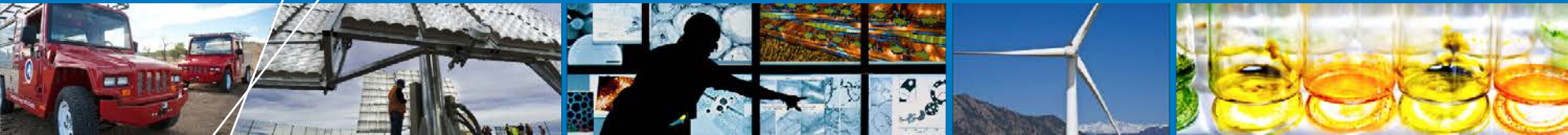


# Advanced Ionomers & MEAs for Alkaline Membrane Fuel Cells



## 2015 DOE Hydrogen and Fuel Cells Program Review

**Bryan Pivovar (PI)**

**June 11, 2015**

**FC108**

This presentation does not contain any proprietary, confidential, or otherwise restricted information

# Overview

## Timeline

- **Start: April 2013**
- **End: Oct 2015**
- **% complete: 60%**

## Barriers

- A. Durability**
- B. Cost**
- C. Performance**

## Budget (\$K)

<b>DOE Cost Share</b>	<b>Team Cost Share</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>2000</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2500</b>

- **FY14 DOE Funding: \$1000K**
- **Planned FY15 DOE Funding: \$400K**
- **Total Project Value: \$2.5M**
- **Cost Share Percentage: 20%**

## Partners – Principal Investigators

**CellEra – Shimshon Gottesfeld**

**3M – Krzysztof Lewinski**

**Colorado School of Mines – Andy Herring**

# Relevance

## DOE Milestones for Alkaline Membrane Fuel Cells (AMFCs)/ Goals

[http://www1.eere.energy.gov/hydrogenandfuelcells/mypp/pdfs/fuel\\_cells.pdf](http://www1.eere.energy.gov/hydrogenandfuelcells/mypp/pdfs/fuel_cells.pdf) pages 3.4-42 and 3.4-44

### Task 1: Electrolytes

1.4

Demonstrate an anion-exchange membrane that retains 99% of original ion exchange capacity for 1000 hours in hydroxide form at  $T > 80^{\circ}\text{C}$ . (2Q 2013)

### Task 3: Membrane Electrode Assemblies, Gas Diffusion Media, and Fuel Cells

3.8

Demonstrate anion-exchange membrane technologies in MEA/single cells with non-PGM catalysts that maintain performance higher than  $350 \text{ mW/cm}^2$  for 2000 hours at  $T > 80^{\circ}\text{C}$ . (4Q, 2016)

Relevance: Alkaline membrane development as an enabling aspect of non-precious catalysis in fuel cells without the concerns of liquid alkaline electrolytes.

### Team Project Goals

Synthesize novel perfluoro (PF) anion exchange membranes (AEMs) with high temperature stability and high water permeability.

Employ high performance PF AEM materials in electrodes and as membranes in alkaline membrane fuel cells.

# Approach

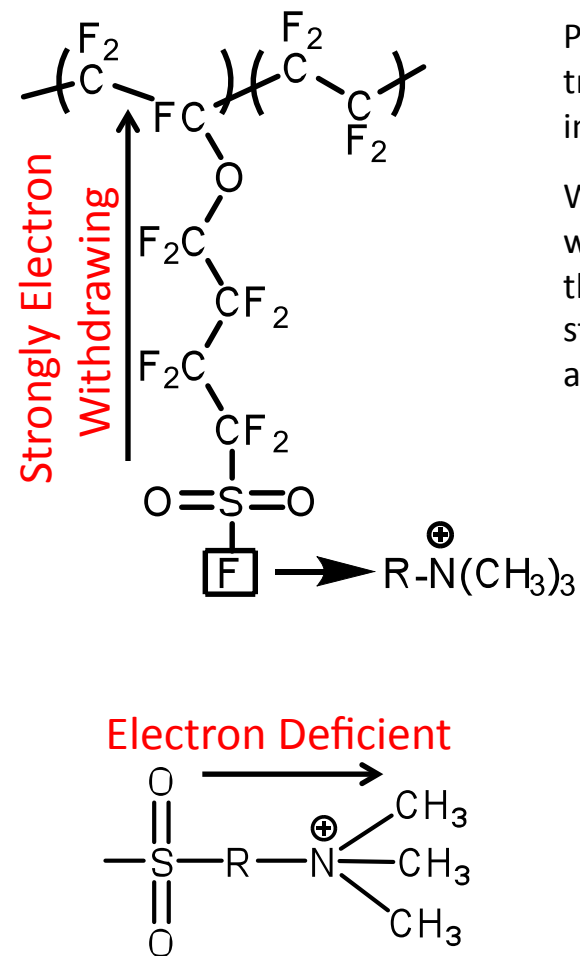
## FY 14/15 Milestones

Qtr	Due Date	Type	Milestones, Deliverables, or Go/No-Go Decision	Status
Q3	6/30/2014	Regular	Report (and compare to CellEra baseline) AMFC performance of 3 novel MEAs using PF AEM materials.	<b>Completed on time</b> (See technical Back up Slide # 28)
Q4	9/30/2014	Stretch	Demonstrate PF AEMs with 5 x 10-10 m <sup>2</sup> /s water self-diffusion coefficient (a 150% increase in water transport self-diffusion coefficient versus traditional hydrocarbon AEMs, critical in enabling higher fuel cell performance due to the increased water transport dependence of AMFCs vs PEMFCs)	<b>Completed on time</b>

Qtr	Due Date	Type	Milestones, Deliverables, or Go/No-Go Decision	Status
Q1	12/31/2014	Quarterly progress measure	Produce at least 2 m <sup>2</sup> of novel PF AEM membranes for systematic studies of properties including mechanical and chemical stability.	<b>Completed on time</b>
Q4	9/30/2015	Milestone	Demonstrate MEA performance >350 mW/cm <sup>2</sup> employing novel PF AEMs in CO <sub>2</sub> free environments.	<b>TBD</b>

# Approach

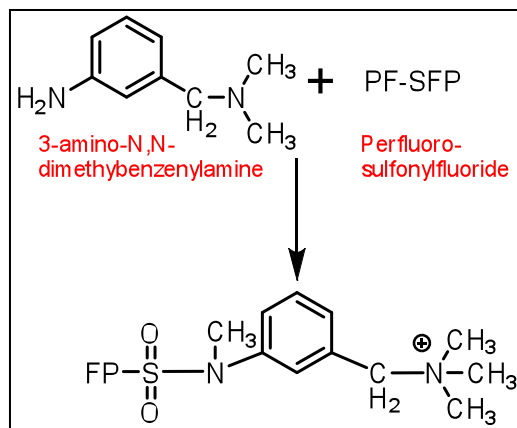
## PF AEM Materials – Targeted Sulfonyl Linkages and Specific Chemistries



Perfluoro (PF) polymer electrolytes exhibit chemical robustness, enhanced water transport and conductivity properties (see slides 18 and 24 for further supporting information).

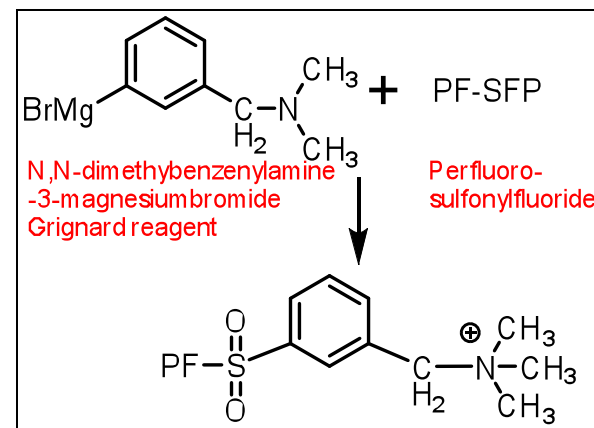
While PF chemistry improves PF sulfonic acid (PFSA) acidity, the strongly electron withdrawing PF backbone creates challenges for anion exchange membranes. From the readily available perfluoro sulfonyl fluoride precursor (PF-SFP), different strategies can be employed to tether cations to the PF-SFP. We have focused on 2 an amide linkage and an aryl/alkyl linkage employing Grignard reagents.

### Amide Linkage



The sulfonamide linkage is demonstrated chemistry<sup>1</sup> and has been employed industrially to synthesize PF AEMs such as Tosflex®.

### Aryl/Alkyl Linkage



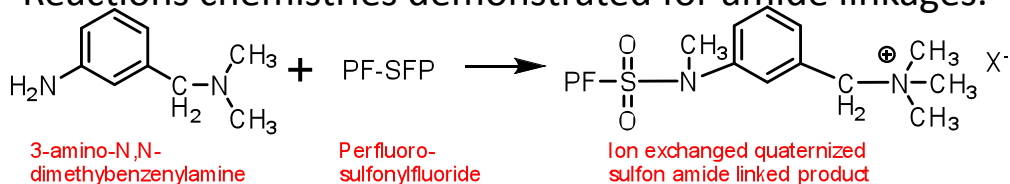
Strategies for amide-free linkages are less developed. We have targeted Grignard reagents as a type of “clip on” chemistry amenable to several different well defined end groups onto PF-SFP sidechains.

<sup>1</sup>Matsui, K. (1987). U.S. Patent No. 4659744.

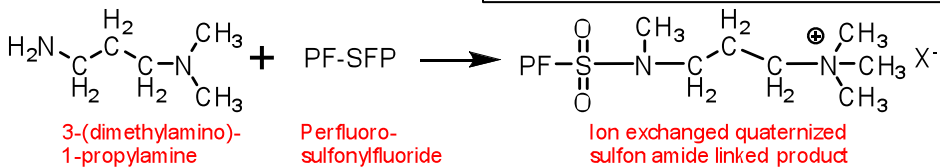
# Accomplishments and Progress

## Amide linkages (2014 AMR)

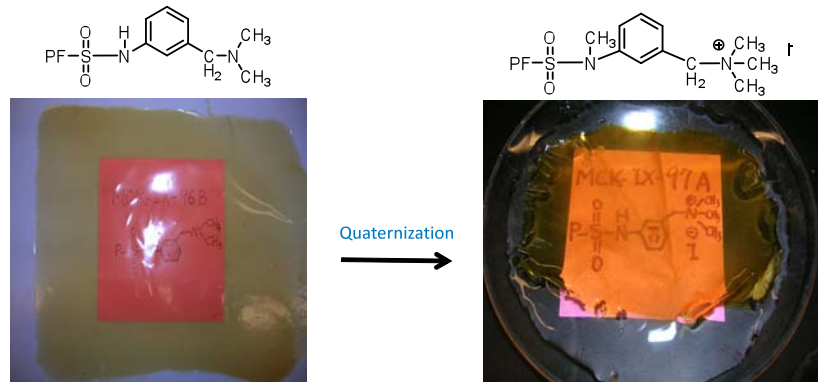
Reactions chemistries demonstrated for amide linkages.



X = I, Br, Cl  
Total of 50 g synthesized (April 2014).



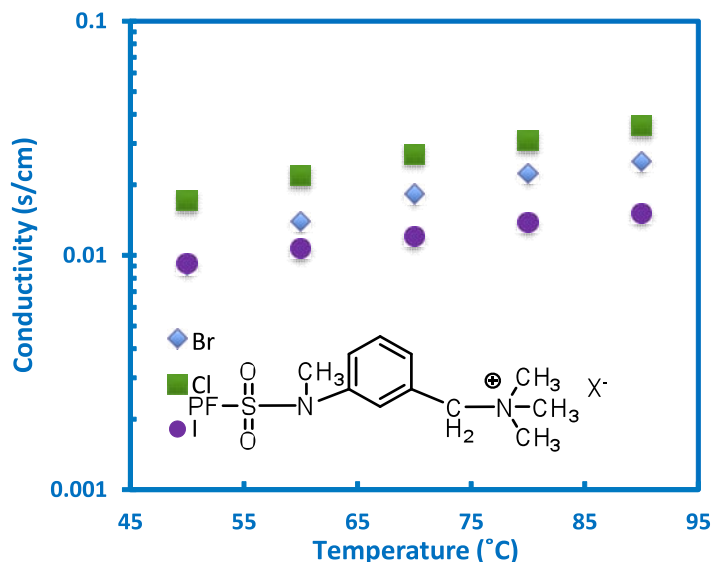
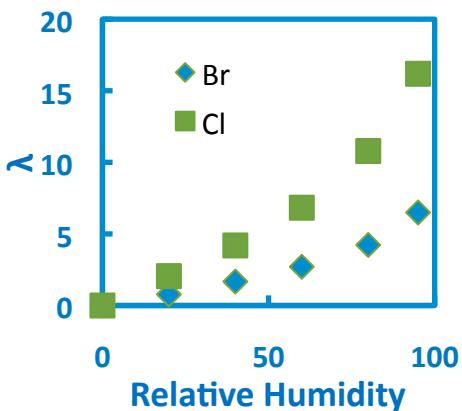
X = I, Br, Cl, PF6  
Total of 30 g synthesized (April 2014).



Pink paper is 3" x 3"

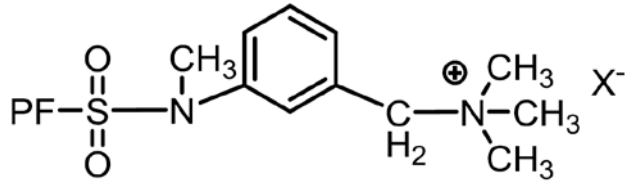
Membranes supplied to CellEra

As of 2014 AMR, we had synthesized many grams of amide linked polymer, cast films and shown good water uptake and conductivity in halide salt form membranes.

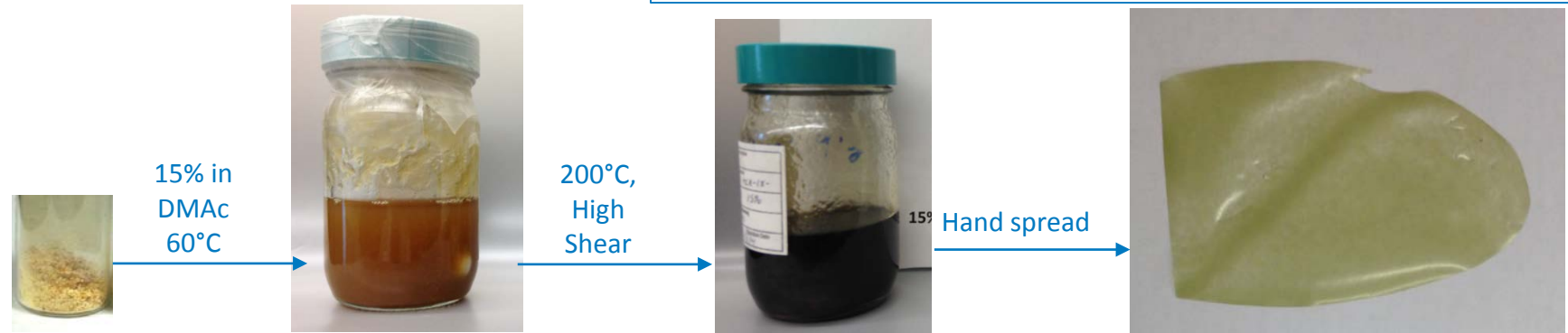


# Accomplishments and Progress

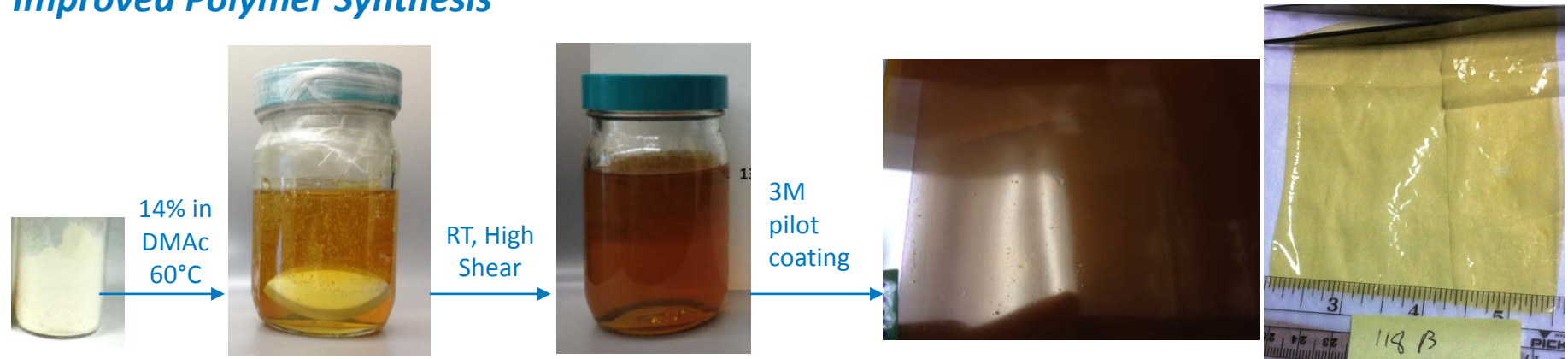
## Improved polymers, polymer solutions, and membranes



### First Polymer Synthesis



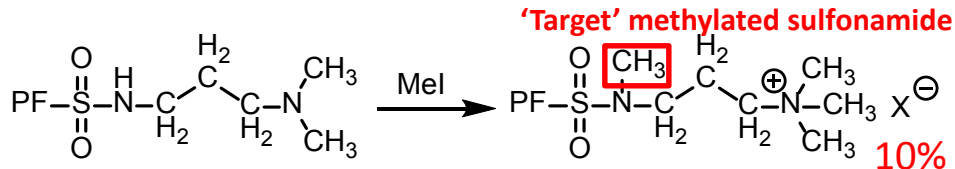
### Improved Polymer Synthesis



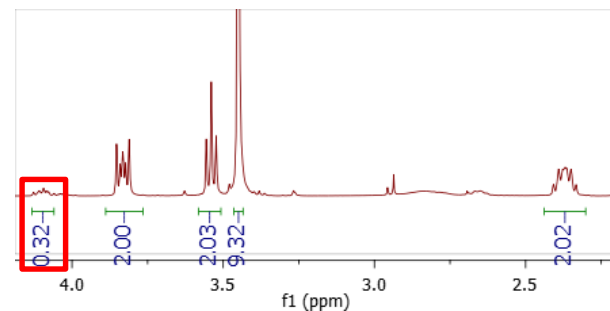
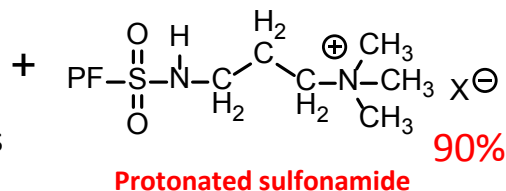
- Early polymers were difficult to dissolve and cast into high quality films
- Improved synthesis resulted in better solutions and pilot scale casting
- Increased quantities (100's grams polymers and sq. meters membrane) obtained

# Accomplishments and Progress

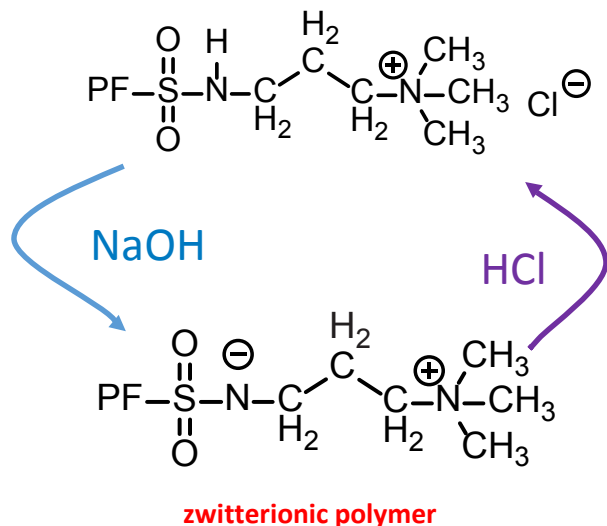
## Polymer chemical structure identified including zwitterionic polymer



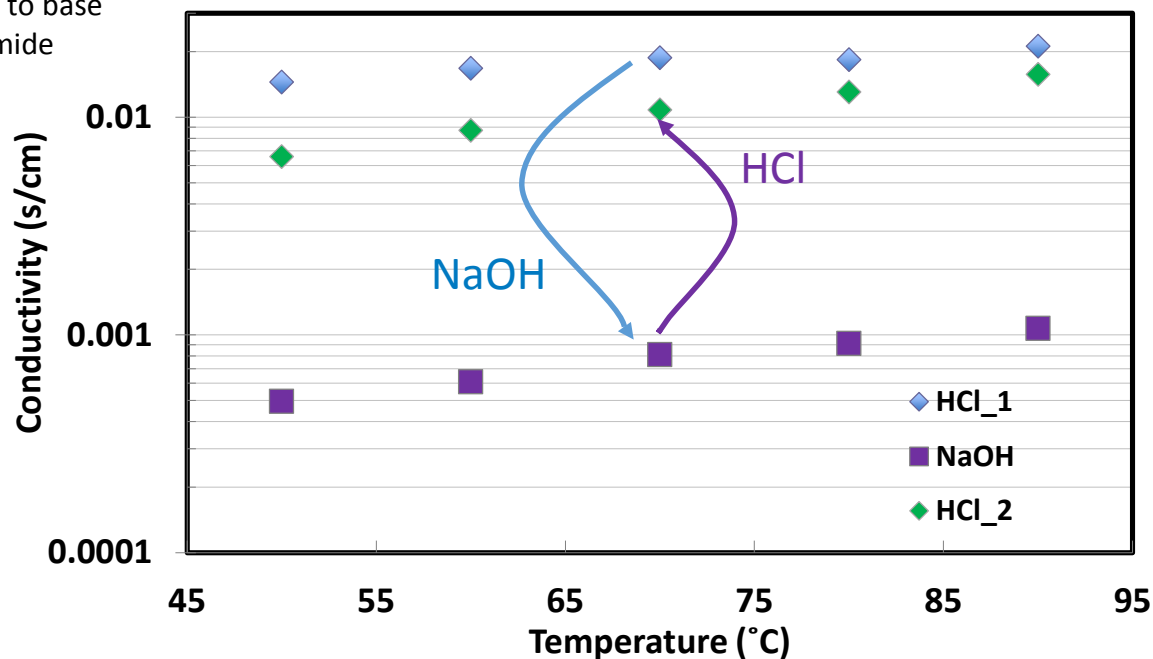
The highest sulfonamide methylation quantified in early materials was only 10% (shown in  $^1\text{H}$  NMR). Many samples showed no signs of methylation.



**Identification of zwitterionic polymer:** The protonated sulfonamide has high, recoverable conductivity in the halide salt form (Cl form shown). But on exposure to base ( $\text{OH}^-$ ), forms a zwitterion due to acidity of sulfonamide proton (with significantly decreased conductivity).



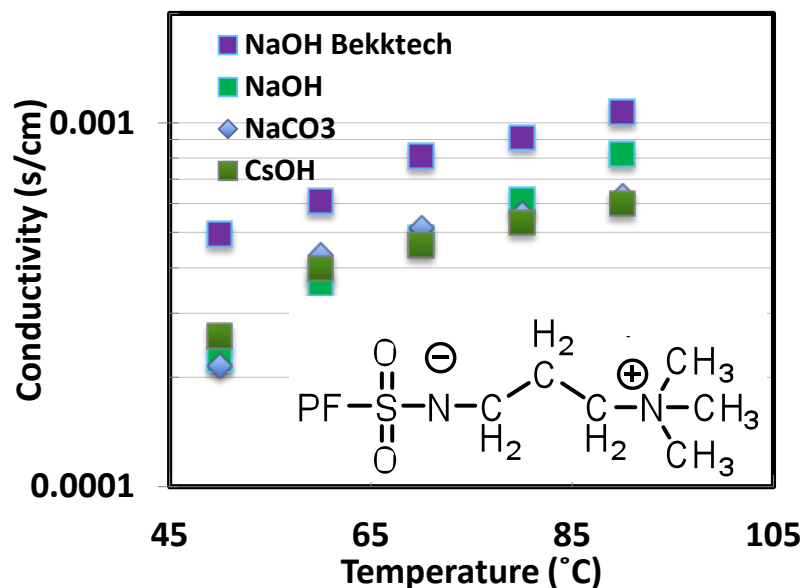
### Recoverable Conductivity





# Accomplishments and Progress

## Probing zwitterionic conductivity to understand process and limits



Zwitterionic membrane still showed measurable conductivity. Anion and cation exchange was used to probe the state of the polymer. Only when CO<sub>2</sub> was excluded did the conductivity of the membrane change (Bekktech). Suggesting anion conduction through the membrane (with hydroxide converting to carbonate form upon exposure to air).

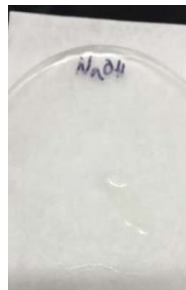
### Thymophthalein treatment (pH 9.4-10.6)



In N<sub>2</sub> glove box (visible blue color)

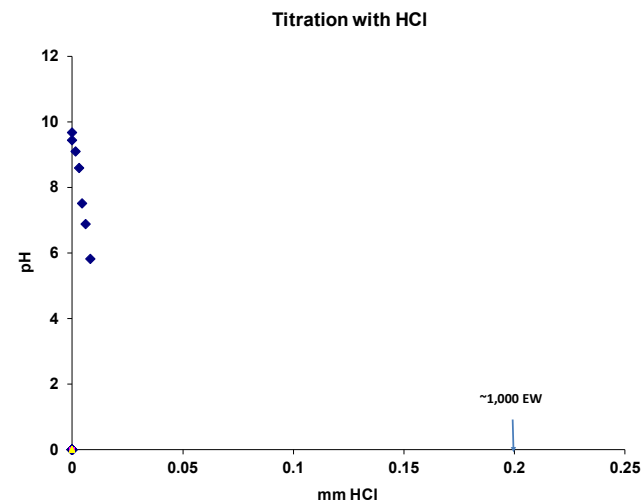


Outside glove box for 15 min (slight blue color)

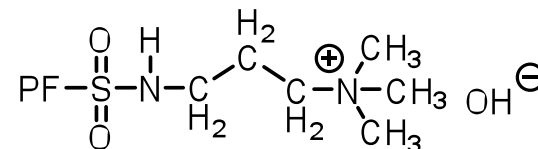


Outside glove box for 1 hour (no blue color)

pH sensitive dye, showed a basic membrane that converted to a less basic form upon exposure to CO<sub>2</sub>.

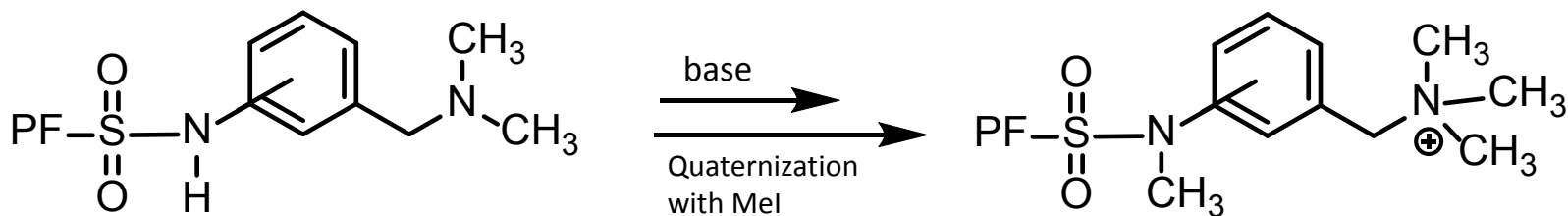


Ion exchange with NaCl followed by titration with acid showed an ion exchange capacity ~20x less than side chain density. Demonstrating that only a small fraction of side chains remained in a hydroxide/carbonate associated state.



# Accomplishments and Progress

## Methylation of sulfonamide linkage

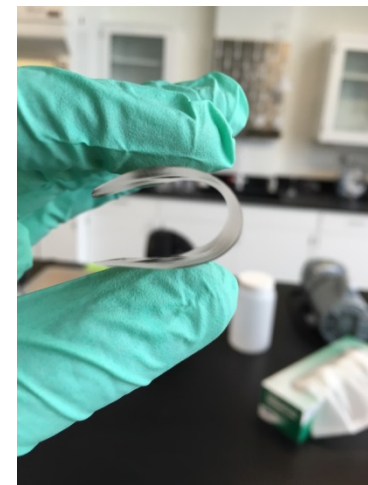


Improved methylation of sulfonamide linkage has been pursued by modified methylation strategy. An added step to activate the N-H bond with a base has resulted in improved reaction efficiency.

Ion Exchange Solution:	Ionic Conductivity (mS/cm)
I <sup>-</sup> form	3
1 M NaOH	10
1 M NaCl (after 1 M NaOH)	17
1 M HCl	19
1 M NaOH (after 1 M HCl)	8

When tested under DI water equilibrated conditions at room temperature, hydroxide conductivities greatly increased compared to zwitterionic form. Higher conductivity of Cl<sup>-</sup> form suggest incomplete reaction or stability concerns.

Films exhibited good mechanical properties.

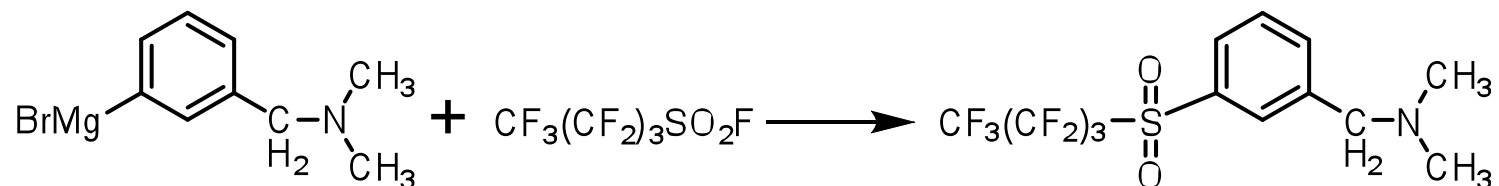


Secondary amine route presented in supplemental slide #27.

# Accomplishments and Progress

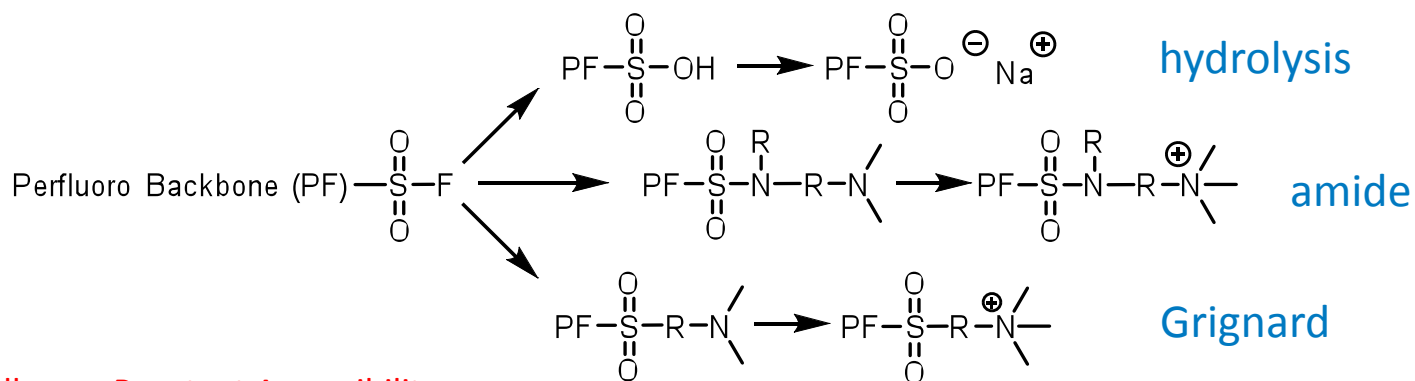
## Grignard Chemistry

### Grignard chemistry successful in small molecules



Grignard chemistry avoids the formation of acidic sulfonamide proton, but has significant challenges in applying to polymeric systems in large part due to solubility issues at different stages of reaction. Typical PF ionomers synthesis benefits from swelling of reacted phases.

Products verified via NMR and IR (2014 AMR)



### Challenge: Reactant Accessibility

For PFSA, the hydrolysis conversion of  $\text{--SO}_2\text{F}$  to  $\text{--SO}_3\text{H}$  sites results in a soluble polymer.

The amide linkage creates a swellable intermediate that is processable in carbonyl amide solvents (DMF, NMP, DMAc).

Grignard chemistries are not compatible with carbonyl amide solvents and therefore have to proceed through an intermediate that does not easily swell, creating reactant accessibility challenges.

# Accomplishments and Progress

## Varying Grignard Chemistry Approaches

### Explored known Grignard solvents (2014)

THF was used in the production of the Grignard reagent but would not swell PF-SFP polymer.

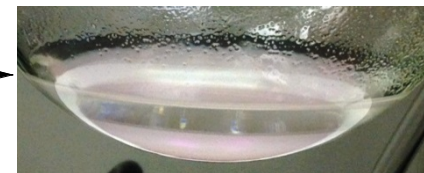
Preswelling PF-SFP in dimethoxy ether (DME) resulted in increased swelling/reaction compared to THF, but still incomplete sulfonyl fluoride conversion.

Product polymer could not be processed into ionomer solution.



PF-SFP

Swollen PF-SFP



Crude Product



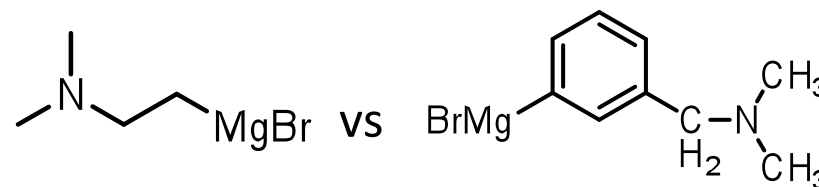
Dried product



Heterogeneous pressed film

### Modifying Grignard reagents

Explore reagents with less steric hindrance.



### Exploring alternative solvents

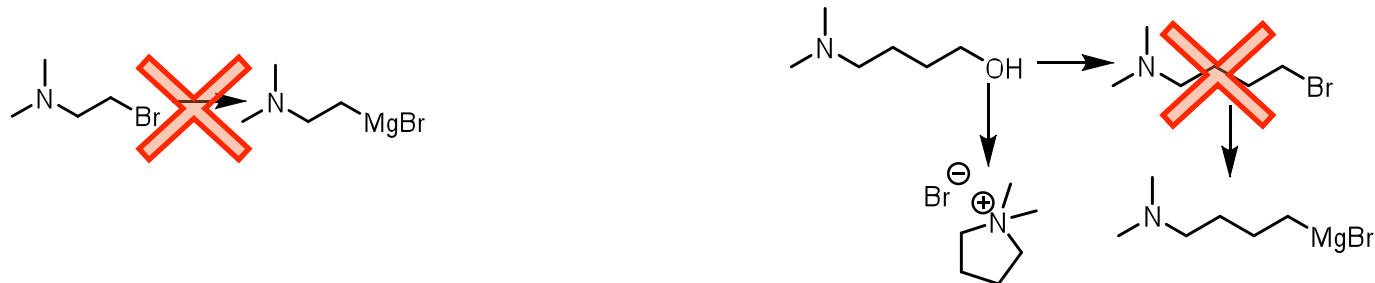
Few solvents are known to dissolve PF-SFP form polymer.  
Solvents also need to be suitable for Grignard chemistry.

# Accomplishments and Progress

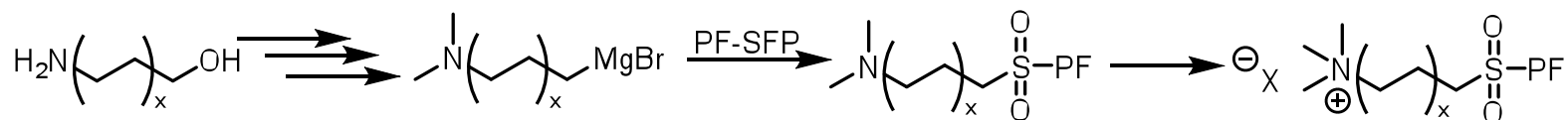
## Modified Grignard Reagents

Short, straight chain dimethylamino – alkyl Grignard reagents were explored to potentially alleviate solubility/steric concerns.

Targeted ethyl and butyl chain lengths were found to be unstable.



Longer alkyl chains may be stable, but have increased solubility/steric concerns for polymer incorporation, as well as increased hydrophobicity.



# Accomplishments and Progress

## Hydro Fluoro Ethers (HFEs) as alternate solvent systems

Increasing EW  $\longrightarrow$

Increasing hydrocarbon character of solvent  $\downarrow$

620 EW (8%)  
3M Novec™ 7100  
 $C_4F_9-O-CH_3$

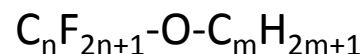
702 EW (5%)  
3M Novec™ 7100  
 $C_4F_9-O-CH_3$

798 EW (5%)  
3M Novec™ 7100  
 $C_4F_9-O-CH_3$

702 EW (5%)  
3M Novec™ 7200  
 $C_4F_9-O-C_2H_5$

798 EW (5%)  
3M Novec™ 7200  
 $C_4F_9-O-C_2H_5$

HFE General Structure:

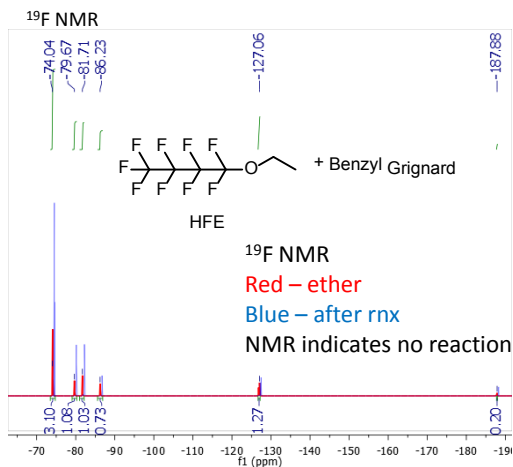


### *Dissolving PFSA sulfonyl fluoride starting polymer*

- Polymer is soluble in a limited number of highly fluorinated fluids.
- Both polymer and reactants need to be soluble.
- 3M Novec™ Engineered HFE fluids are good candidates for reaction solvents due to semi-fluorinated character.
- <725 EW ionomer forms true solution in Novec™ 7100 & 7200 fluids

# Accomplishments and Progress

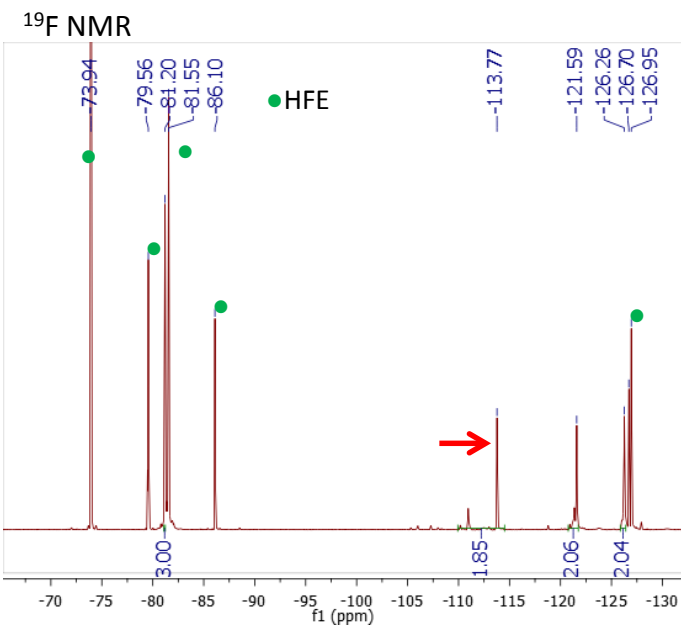
## Screening Grignard chemistry in HFEs



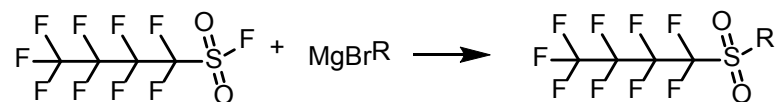
<sup>1</sup>H and <sup>19</sup>F NMR used to evaluate Grignard chemistry in HFEs.

Grignard reactants found to be stable/non-reacting with HFEs.

Solubility of Grignard reagent/HFE combinations tested to date, have displayed some solubility limitation that improved with temperature.



Initial small molecule screening studies have shown Grignard chemistry in HFE to be successful.



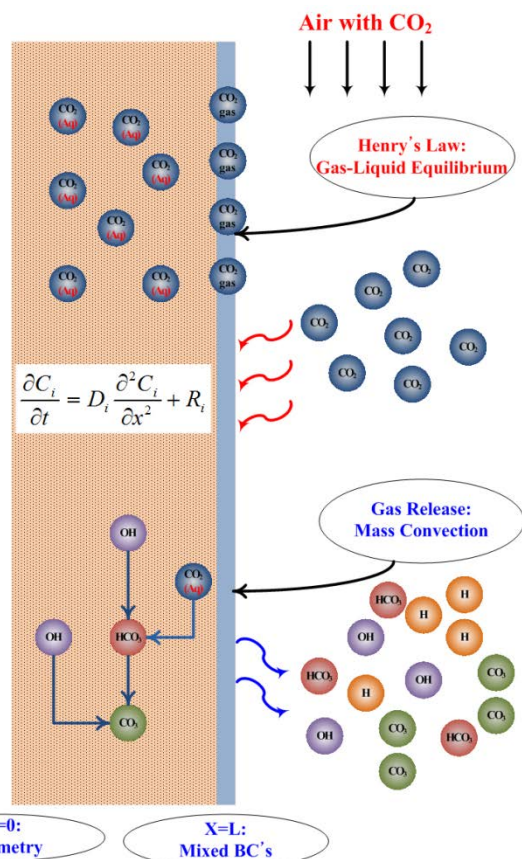
Perfluoro sulfonyl fluoride model compound (C<sub>4</sub>F<sub>9</sub>SO<sub>2</sub>F) was reacted with a Grignard reagent in HFE. Shift of 108 ppm peak to 113.77 ppm (red arrow) interpreted as conversion of sulfonyl fluoride to alkyl group.

# Accomplishments and Progress

## Modeling of carbonate formation and equilibrium in AEMs

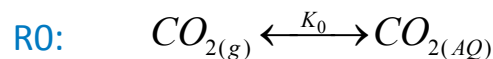
Carbonate formation is a known source of performance loss for hydroxide conducting fuel cells.

Scrubbing CO<sub>2</sub> from air has been employed as a mitigation technique, but self-purge has also been promoted as a viable approach to prevent carbonate related losses. Fundamentally, the carbonate/bicarbonate/hydroxide equilibrium is poorly understood.



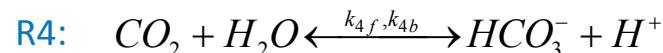
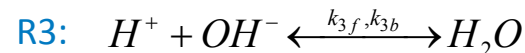
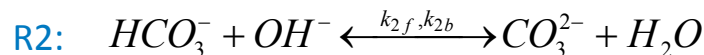
Gas-Liquid Equilibrium: Henry's Law

→ Explains CO<sub>2</sub> dissociation into water (membrane)



Reaction Equation of Membrane Neutralization

→ Kinetics of CO<sub>2</sub> dissociation

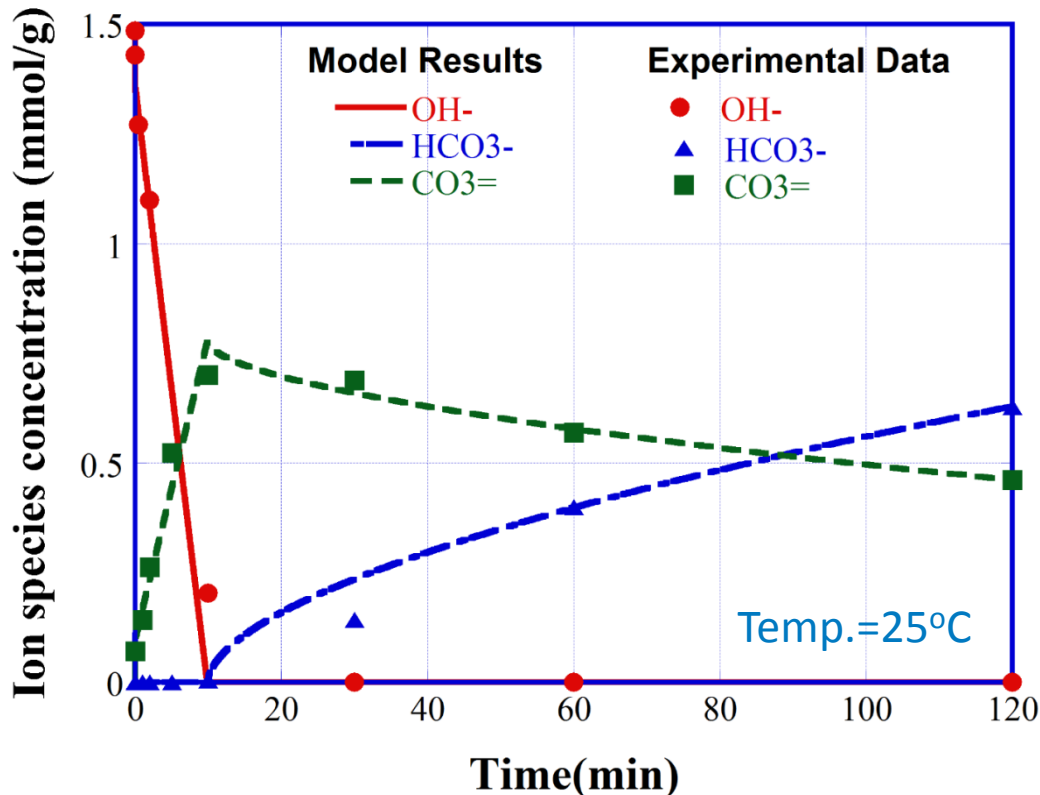


In collaboration with Prof. Sangseok Yu (Chungnam National University)



# Accomplishments and Progress

## Modeling of carbonate formation and equilibrium in AEMs



Experimental data from Yanagi, H. and K. Fukuta, ECS Transactions, 2008. 16(2): p. 257-262.

Data from Tokuyama has shown that hydroxide form membranes is quickly converted to carbonate/bicarbonate when exposed to ambient air (400 ppm CO<sub>2</sub>).

The thermodynamics and kinetics of this uptake had not yet been explained computationally. Our modeling results show good agreement with experimental measurements, and can be extended to longer times (equilibrium conditions) and be used to perform parametric studies investigating membrane thickness, CO<sub>2</sub> concentration and temperature.

The model developed can be combined with a fuel cell performance model to probe the needs for CO<sub>2</sub> scrubbing, the losses associated with carbonate formation, and the limits of self-purge under ambient conditions to remove CO<sub>2</sub> from the system.

# Accomplishments and Progress

## Responses to Previous Year (2014 AMR) Reviewer's Comments

- **Reviewer Comment:** While the PIs are correct that the PF-based electrolyte was proved superior in cation exchange membranes, this does not directly translate into AEMs. In fact, as the PIs pointed out, PF can cause chemical stability issues in AEM due to strong electron-withdrawing PF backbones. It is also debatable whether to expect higher OH<sup>-</sup> conductivity by using PF backbone in AEMs. Again, the strong electron-withdrawing backbone helps to form stronger acid in proton exchange membranes, but in AEMs, the same PF backbone may cause a weaker base.
- **Reviewer Comment:** The base for the project is questionable. It is unclear why fluorinated polymer is needed with the hydrocarbon polymer. Amide alkyl has C-H bonds. The whole idea does not make sense.
- **Response:** While, in general, the approach to the project was seen very favorably by reviewers in the 2014 AMR (2 review bullets out of 11 had strong criticism for the approach). Perhaps, in part, because the rationale for the approach was presented less in the 2014 AMR compared to the 2013 AMR. A specific slide has been added to the Technical Backup Slide Section (#24) to address this, but the 2013 AMR presentation also goes into deeper detail. Regarding the first reviewers comments above. PF electrolytes impart higher water transport and conductivity due to improved phase separation not acid or base strength (unless very weak acids or bases are used). Base strength in these systems is related to the stability of the cations used, as hydroxide, unlike protons, cannot form a covalent bond with the ionic group without degrading the ionic group (neutral acid forms exist that can later deprotonate, but hydroxide attacks and degrades cations typically forming alcohols). Therefore, if the cation is stable the hydroxide is available for conduction. For the second reviewers comment, in acidic systems it is important to remove C-H bonds from the system due to stability concerns with peroxide that aren't the same in basic conditions (C-H bonded systems can be stable). The use of PF polymers is to take advantage of PF transport properties and is presented in more detail on slide #24.
- **Reviewer Comment:** Particularly disappointing is the lack of characterization capabilities at this point in the project. Using other anions as a proxy is OK; however, eventually these characterizations have to be done in the -OH form.
- **Response:** This has been addressed throughout this year's presentation. The recognition of zwitterions was critical to our understanding of performance and our earlier concerns with hydroxide stability.
- **Reviewer Comment:** The only clear contribution of NREL is the DFT modeling. The PI should indicate on each slide, where appropriate, the material and information coming from each organization. The roles of the participants in the project are unclear.
- **Response:** The team has regular (biweekly) web based meetings where NREL and CSM are in the same room and 3M joins virtually and there is significant overlap in the contributions of NREL, CSM and 3M. The specific roles have been called out more specifically on the collaboration slide (#19).

# Collaborations

Institutions	Role
<b><u>National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL):</u></b> Bryan Pivovar (PI), Matt Sturgeon, Dan Ruddy, Andrew Park, Zbyslaw Owczarczyk, Hai Long	Prime, Oversees the project, lead novel PF AEM synthesis (all Grignard, majority of small molecule, and some amide work), PF AEM characterization, modeling
<b><u>Colorado School of Mines (CSM):</u></b> Mei-Chen Kuo, Zach Page-Belknap, Andy Herring	Sub; synthesis of PF AEM polymers (amide linkage), membranes characterization (water uptake and conductivity).
<b><u>3M (3M):</u></b> Krzysztof Lewinski, Mike Yandrasits, Steve Hamrock	Sub; Consulting on novel chemistries; preparation of solutions and dispersions; membrane fabrication.
<b><u>CellEra (CellEra):</u></b> Shimshon Gottesfeld, Dario Dekel	Sub; MEA fabrication; fuel cell testing and characterization (reduced role past year)
<b><u>Chungnam University</u></b> Sangseok Yu	In kind; modeling of carbonate poisoning.

# Remaining Challenges and Barriers

- **Polymer Synthesis:**
  - Solubility/chemistry concerns for PF AEM synthesis
    - Amide linkages
    - Aryl/Alkyl linkages (Grignard)
- **Dispersion/Solution Preparation:**
  - Optimize solution/dispersions for electrodes and membrane fabrication.
  - Durability testing of membranes
  - Mechanical properties of membranes
- **Fuel Cell Testing:**
  - Application of membranes and dispersions as fuel cells and fuel cell membranes including performance and durability testing.

# Future Work

- **Membrane Synthesis:**
  - Improved methylation/Secondary amine tethering for non-protic sulfonamide linkage.
  - Grignard (or related) chemistry in HFES
- **Characterization:**
  - Continued characterization along the lines of that currently on-going
- **Modeling**
  - Parametric studies looking at temperature, membrane thickness, and CO<sub>2</sub> concentration
- **Dispersion Preparation, Membrane Casting, MEA fabrication/Fuel Cell Testing:**
  - To be performed after target polymers are achieved

# Summary

- **Relevance:** Developing advanced PF AEMs for improved performance AMFCs.
- **Approach:** Developing novel PF AEM chemistry based on readily available sulfonyl fluoride precursor.
- **Accomplishments and Progress:** The project has explored multiple PF AEM chemistries for amide and aryl/alkyl linkages (Grignard). We have improved our polymer synthesis and membrane casting, but have obtained only zwitterionic polymers from amide linkages. We have further investigated novel Grignard chemistry, and have shown PF-SFP solubility and Grignard viability in HFEs. We have developed and applied models to evaluate carbonate uptake/poisoning in AMFCs.
- **Collaborations:** We have a diverse team of researchers including 1 national labs, 2 universities, and 2 industry participants that are leaders in the relevant fields of PF polymer electrolytes/dispersions(3M) and AMFC stack and system development (CellEra).
- **Proposed Future Research:** Focused on improved polymer synthesis as the critical enabling element toward AEMs in energy applications.

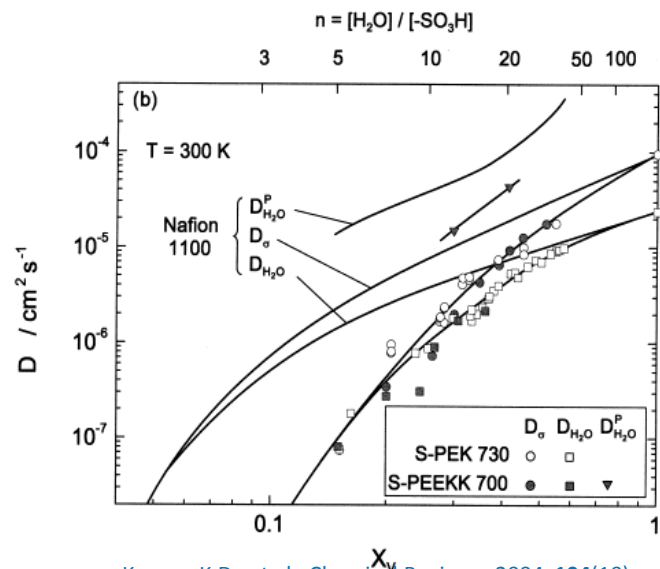
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# Technical Backup Slides

# Relevance

## Benefits of Perfluoro electrolytes vs Hydrocarbon electrolytes

Our approach focuses on achieving **higher-temperature, higher-power-density AMFC operation** through implementation of **novel alkaline perfluoro (PF) membranes and ionomeric dispersions**. The PF materials proposed are expected to enhance water transport capabilities and electrode performance/durability significantly, thereby enabling higher temperature and power density operation. The combination of high current density and operating temperature will improve the ability of these devices to tolerate ambient CO<sub>2</sub>, potentially enabling complete tolerance to ambient CO<sub>2</sub>.



Kreuer, K.D., et al., *Chemical Reviews*, 2004. **104**(10): p. 4637-4678

Most AEMs are based on hydrocarbon polymer chemistry. From significant work in the area of PEMs, water transport and conductivity has been shown to be **significantly higher in PF polymers**, particularly at lower hydration levels.

While perfluoro membranes are electron withdrawing, as long as cations remain chemically stable, hydroxide is a free cation and should not have losses associated with decreased basicity compared to hydrocarbon membranes.

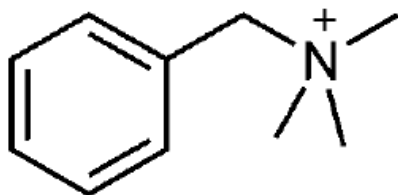


# Approach

## Validity of PF AEM approach

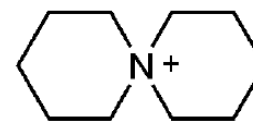
*Perhaps the most exciting advance in the AEM area in the past decade has come from the high hydroxide stabilities of covalently tetherable cations recently reported. At this point in time, we feel clear that cations with high hydroxide stability have been demonstrated. Demonstrating these cations in high performance polymers is the remaining challenge*

Our team through BES funded efforts in cation stability have quantified benzyltrimethyl ammonium (BTMA<sup>+</sup>) stability at 80°C of less than 10% degradation after 5,000 hours, and a half-life of over 4 years. Stability capable of enabling several applications.



BTMA<sup>+</sup>

Kreuer and Marino have shown multiple cations with increased stability relative to BTMA<sup>+</sup>, with 6-azonia-spiro[5.5]undecane showing a 20x improvement in base stability.



6-azonia-spiro[5.5]undecane

Marino, M.G. and K.D. Kreuer, *Chemsuschem*, 2015, **8**(3): p. 513-523

M Sturgeon, C Macomber, C Engtrakul, H Long, and B Pivovar, J. *Electrochem. Soc.*, 162 (4) F366-F372 (2015).

# Accomplishments and Progress

## Mechanical Property Investigation

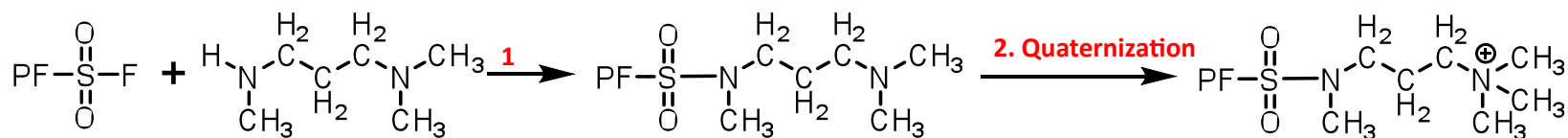
Sample	Tensile Strength (Mpa)	Young's Modulus (Mpa)	Elongation (%)	Thickness ( $\mu\text{m}$ )
Non-Annealed	$6.2 \pm 0.9$	$289 \pm 73$	$3.6\% \pm 1.4\%$	$34 \pm 2.1$
Annealed	$49 \pm 3.2$	$389 \pm 63$	$13\% \pm 2.4\%$	$26 \pm 1.1$

- Drop cast membranes, once removed from the Teflon<sup>®</sup> substrate, were observed to be highly brittle (iodide form)
- Membranes were annealed at 160 °C and 400 psi for 10 minutes
- Tensile tests were performed at 60 °C and <0% relative humidity
- Non-annealed samples disintegrated before measurement could be conducted at >90% relative humidity
- Annealed samples possessed 8x the tensile strength, 1.3x the Young's modulus and nearly 4x times the degree of elongation
- Cl<sup>-</sup> and OH<sup>-</sup> (CO<sub>3</sub><sup>2-</sup>/HCO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>) ion forms were also tested
- Slight decreases in the tensile strength at dry conditions were observed following ion exchange

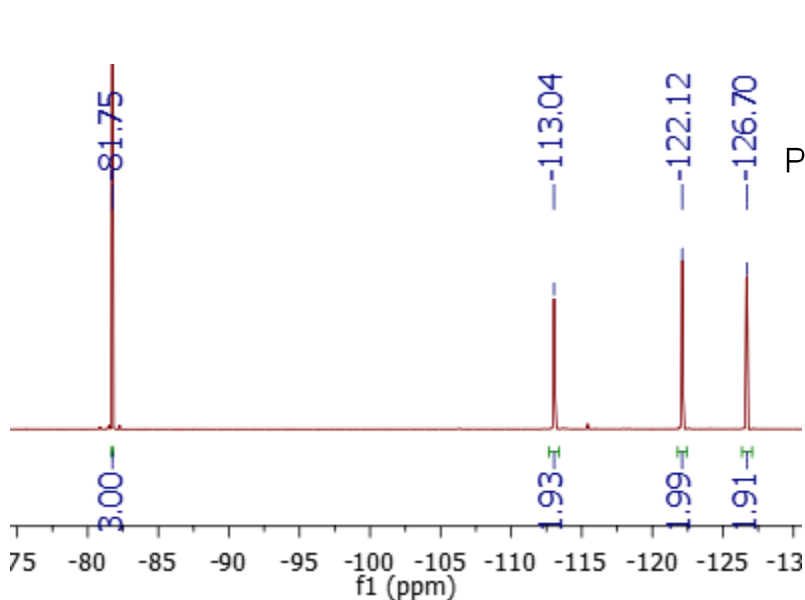
Sample	Tensile Strength (Mpa)	Young's Modulus (Mpa)	Elongation (%)	Thickness ( $\mu\text{m}$ )
< 0% Relative Humidity				
HCl	$26 \pm 2.6$	$417 \pm 44$	$10\% \pm 1.9\%$	$57 \pm 10$
KOH	$45 \pm 7.2$	$583 \pm 83$	$15\% \pm 1.0\%$	$34 \pm 2.8$
> 90% Relative Humidity				
HCl	$5.8 \pm 0.8$	$60 \pm 5.8$	$28\% \pm 8.2\%$	$41 \pm 6.8$
KOH	$13 \pm 2.0$	$87 \pm 16$	$75\% \pm 9.1\%$	$29 \pm 3.4$

# Accomplishments and Progress

## Secondary amine as amide reactant

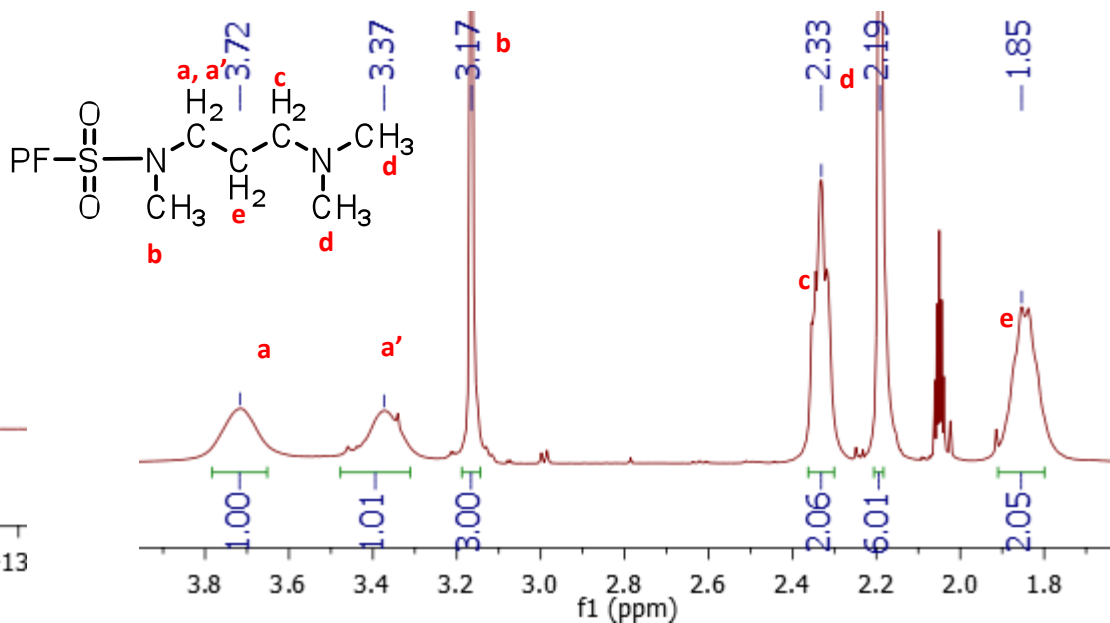


Employing a secondary reactant amine ensures that product obtained is methylated at the sulfonamide position.



<sup>19</sup>F NMR of dimethylamino product (after step 1). S-F at 46.12ppm is gone and -108ppm shifted to -113.04ppm.

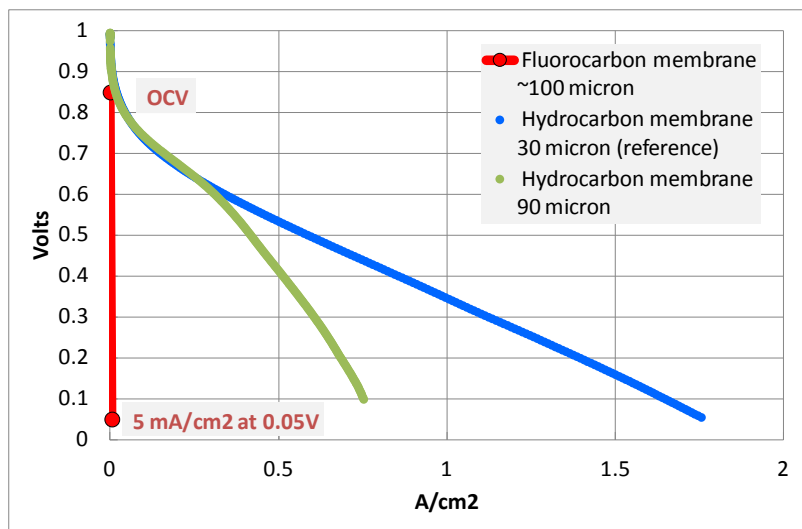
NMR of small molecule analogue shows that sulfonyl group has been converted and that the sulfonamide position contains a methyl group.



<sup>1</sup>H NMR dimethylamino product (after step 1). Diastereotopic protons due to limited rotation around sulfonyl linked amine.

# Accomplishments and Progress

## Fuel Cell Testing (CellEra)

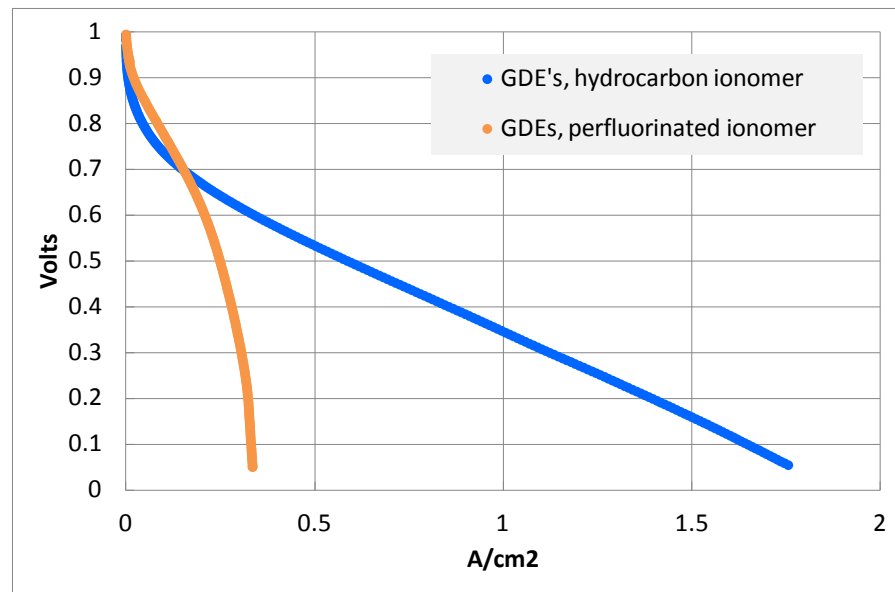


90  $\mu$  PF membrane (red) , 30  $\mu$  HC membrane (blue) and 90  $\mu$  HC membrane (green) – all with standard cellera GDEs

CellEra tested early amide linked polymers in fuel cells (before we had clear understanding of zwitterionic nature of amide linked materials). Exceptionally low performance now attributed to exceptionally low conductance.

When applied to electrodes, the performance of even the zwitterionic polymers showed surprisingly good performance for low conducting material, even outperforming standard materials at high potential/low current density.

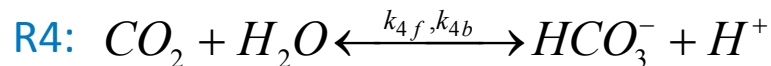
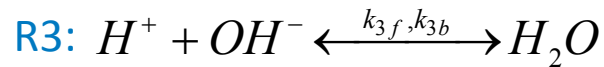
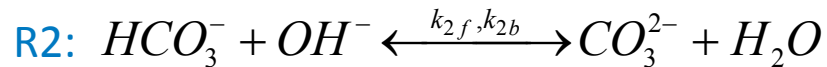
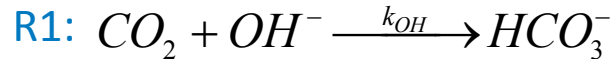
GDE w. recast PF ionomer (red) & GDE with recast HC material (blue); Same HC membrane in both cases



# Accomplishments and Progress

## Modeling of carbonate formation and equilibrium in AEMs - Reactions

Species: A: CO<sub>2</sub> B: OH C: HCO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> D: OH E: H F: H<sub>2</sub>O



$$-r_{1A} = +k_{OH} C_A C_B$$

$$-r_{2C} = +k_{2f} C_B C_C - k_{2b} C_D C_F$$

$$-r_{3E} = +k_{3f} C_B C_E - k_{3b} C_F$$

$$-r_{4A} = +k_{4f} C_A C_F - k_{4b} C_C C_E$$

### Stoichiometric Relation

$$r_A = r_{1A} + r_{4A} = k_{OH} C_A C_B - k_{4f} C_A C_F + k_{4b} C_C C_E$$

$$r_B = r_{1B} + r_{2B} + r_{3B} = k_{OH} C_A C_B - k_{2f} C_B C_C + k_{2b} C_D C_F - k_{3f} C_B C_E + k_{3b} C_F$$

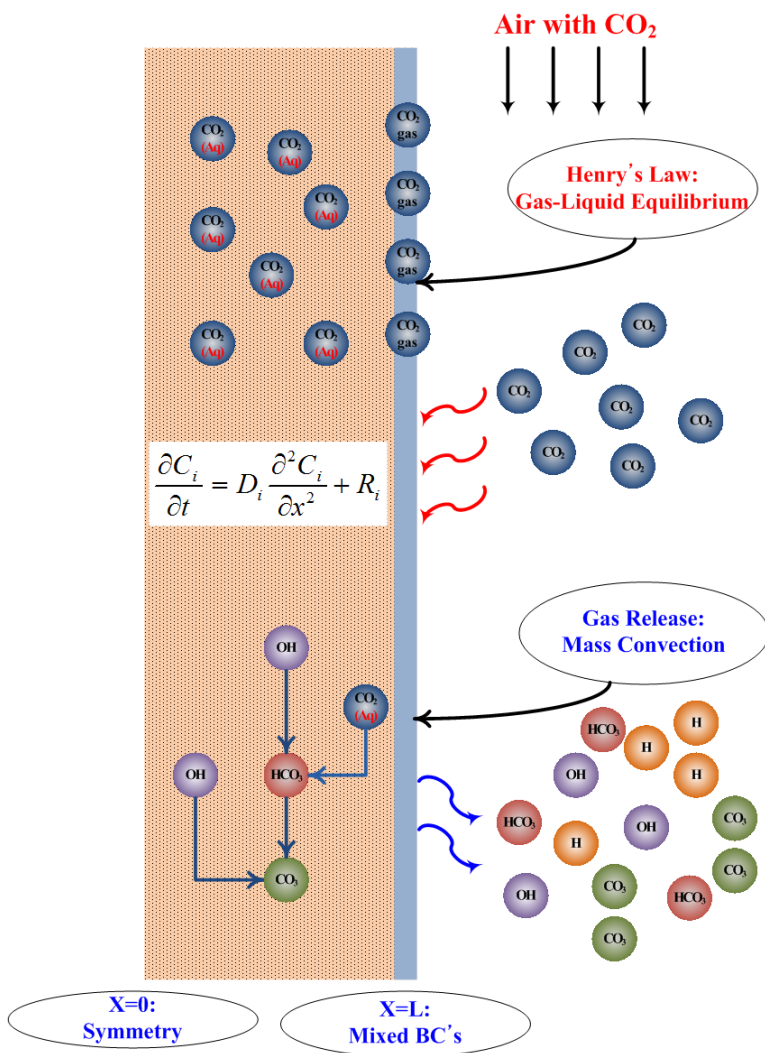
$$r_C = r_{1C} + r_{2C} + r_{4C} = k_{OH} C_A C_B - k_{2f} C_B C_C + k_{2b} C_D C_F + k_{4f} C_A C_F - k_{4b} C_C C_E$$

$$r_D = r_{2D} = k_{2f} C_B C_C - k_{2b} C_D C_F$$

$$r_E = r_{3E} + r_{4E} = -k_{3f} C_B C_E + k_{3b} C_F + k_{4f} C_A C_F - k_{4b} C_C C_E$$

# Accomplishments and Progress

## Modeling of carbonate formation and equilibrium in AEMs – Boundary conditions



$$x = 0 : i = CO_2, OH, HCO_3^-, CO_3^{2-}, H$$

$$\frac{\partial C_i}{\partial x} = 0$$

$$x = L : i = CO_2$$

$$N_{flux,in} = N_{flux,out}$$

$$-D_i \frac{\partial C_i}{\partial x} = h_{d,i} \left( \frac{C_i(L,t)}{Henry} - C_{i,\infty} \right)$$

$$x = L : i = OH, HCO_3^-, CO_3^{2-}, H$$

$$N_{flux,in} = N_{flux,out}$$

$$-D_i \frac{\partial C_i}{\partial x} = h_{d,i} (C_i(L,t) - C_{i,\infty})$$