

US Unveils Energy Budget

US President George W Bush has unveiled his US\$3.1 trillion budget 2009 proposal, which includes its largest budget request ever for carbon capture and storage technology, according to the Department of Energy. Bush set aside \$648 million in the DOE's 2009 budget for research, development and demonstration of advanced coal technologies, representing an increase of nearly \$128 million from the 2008 budget appropriation. Among the 2009 budget priorities laid out by Energy Secretary Samuel Bodman and the DOE is nuclear energy, which will receive \$932 million in funding compared to \$755 million appropriated for 2008. According to Bodman, the money allocated for the expansion of nuclear power would "set the stage for a nuclear renaissance in America". To address the immediate need for nuclear power expansion domestically, the government's Nuclear Power 2010 program seeks \$241.6 million to support industry cost-shared, near-term technology development and licensing demonstration activities. The number one priority of the DOE is to get new nuclear plants under construction, DOE Assistant Secretary Dennis Spurgeon says. To maintain a 20 per cent share of electricity, construction of at least 45 to 50 new nuclear units by 2030, Spurgen says. Electricity generation from renewable sources, on the other hand, has had a funding reduction in the DOE's total 2009 request. The Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy asks for \$1.26 billion, a 27 per cent reduction from the 2008 level of \$1.72 billion. The request raises the investment into geothermal energy by 50 per cent, whereas funding is cut for research in solar energy, hydropower and industrial energy efficiency. The DOE's overall budget of \$25 billion budget for fiscal year 2009 is 4.7 per cent over the budget for the current fiscal year and 25 per cent higher than in 2001, Bush's first year in office.

[Source essa news]