



The University of Texas of the Permian Basin
4901 E. University
Odessa, Texas 79762
www.utpb.edu

NEWS RELEASE

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CONGRESS APPROVES DEFENSE APPROPRIATION BILL HUTCHISON SECURES \$1 MILLION FOR UTPB REACTOR

Contact: Melanie Nicholas, Public Information Officer, 552-2806

Editor's note: Images of the reactor project will be available for media's use by 2 p.m. TODAY. Please call 552-2806 if you would like them e-mailed to your office.

WASHINGTON – UT Permian Basin received big news Friday when Texas Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison announced that both the House and Senate have approved the final version of the Fiscal Year 2007 Department of Defense Appropriations bill. The bill includes \$1 million secured by Hutchison to support construction of a next-generation nuclear reactor at UTPB.

“The University of Texas of the Permian Basin has partnered with public and private sector entities to bring this important project to West Texas,” Hutchison said. “This funding will help expand our knowledge of nuclear physics and allow students to train at a state-of-the-art facility.”

UTPB President David Watts said he was excited to hear the news, and he thanked Hutchison for her continued support of the project.

“Senator Hutchison continues to support Texas – and UTPB is proud to play its part in developing new technologies and educating young scientists,” Watts said. “Her vision of Texas as a world leader in energy and nuclear science is critical to our success.”

Watts also thanked Congressman Mike Conaway and his staff for their support in the House.

“UT Permian Basin is thrilled about this announcement, and we're very appreciative of and thankful to our entire Congressional delegation,” he added.

The reactor will operate at a higher temperature than conventional facilities and employ an innovative gas cooling system. Studies conducted in the high-temperature environment could lead to the development of new materials, advanced industrial processes and more efficient methods of energy production. The project, scheduled for completion in 2012, is a partnership between UTPB, the cities of Midland and Odessa, Andrews County and General Atomics.

The legislation will now be sent to President Bush to be signed into law.

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