

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Jeff Fortenberry today sponsored successful legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives that rescinds more than \$17 million in funding for the production of mixed oxide, or MOX, nuclear fuel, and redirects the money to strengthen nuclear security efforts. Currently, the Department of Energy receives funding to downblend surplus plutonium from nuclear weapons into MOX fuel for use in American nuclear power plants. Thus far, the fuel has failed to find use in practical commercial application.

"The MOX fuel program has cost billions in taxpayer dollars with little practical effect," said Fortenberry. "Instead, this funding would be better used strengthening our nuclear security efforts. My amendment redirects funds to the Global Threat Reduction Initiative, which fulfills our government's fundamental purpose of protecting our nation from nuclear security threats. It restores funding for the GTRI to 2012 levels so that its work can continue without delay."

By the end of the current fiscal year, the Global Threat Reduction Initiative will have converted or verified as shutdown 81 research reactors, removed over 3,400 kilograms of vulnerable nuclear material, and secured an estimated 1,355 buildings containing high priority nuclear or radiological materials.

Fortenberry is a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee and is a co-founder of the House Nuclear Security Caucus.

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