March 22, 2012

Washington, DC - Southwestern Pennsylvania Congressmen Tim Murphy and Jason Altmire welcomed an announcement today from the Department of Energy (DOE) that funding will be made available to support the design and license of up to two small modular reactors (SMR). The program builds upon legislation to facilitate SMR development that the two lawmakers introduced last year.

"The safe expansion of new nuclear technology like the small modular reactor program is a must-have if our nation is going to pursue energy independence in a climate of rising global demand for oil and electricity. Fortunately, our region is well-positioned to lead the way in energy security because of our abundant resources and know-how in nuclear, coal, and natural gas."

"Energy independence means looking at every possible source of power, including nuclear," said Congressman Altmire. "Small modular reactors provide a cost-effective power source to meet our energy demands, and we must look for opportunities, such as this, to expand the industry. I welcome this announcement and encourage energy companies in western Pennsylvania and around the country to take advantage of this opportunity."

Small reactors have unique features that are not available with larger reactors, making them more attractive to a greater number of utilities. Small reactors can be built more quickly and at a much lower cost than larger reactors. Additionally, they can bring nuclear energy to more areas of the country because small reactors do not need to be located near large sources of water for cooling purposes.

Last year, Congressmen Murphy and Altmire introduced the Nuclear Power 2021 Act (H.R. 1808) to spur economic development of a Nuclear Regulatory Commission approved small modular reactor. The legislation is based on a program created in 2002, the Nuclear Power 2010 program, to encourage the private sector to build new nuclear power plants in the United States. Through this program, Westinghouse was able to enter into a public-private partnership with the U.S. Department of Energy as it designed its new AP-1000 nuclear reactor and moved through the licensing process. Westinghouse's AP-1000 project has already created and sustained approximately 5,000 jobs in the United States, the largest concentration of which are

based in western Pennsylvania.