



# International geothermal energy expert to attend public hearing

**Parliament House, Canberra, 20 June 2007**

The H.P. Meissner Professor of Chemical Engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Professor Jefferson W. Tester, will give evidence this Wednesday (20 June) on geothermal energy for a parliamentary inquiry into Australia's renewable energy sectors.

Professor Tester is recognised as an international authority on geothermal energy and was the Chair of an MIT-led interdisciplinary assessment panel, which recently published a report on *The Future of Geothermal Energy: Impact of Enhanced Geothermal Systems on the United States in the 21st Century*. The report evaluates the technical and economic feasibility of geothermal energy becoming a major supplier of primary energy for US base-load generation capacity by 2050.

The House of Representatives Industry and Resources Committee is conducting a program of public hearings for its case study into Australia's renewable energy sectors, including—solar, wave, tidal, geothermal, wind, bioenergy and hydrogen. The case study is examining the relative state of development of these sectors and their prospects for economically viable electricity generation, storage and transmission.

Geothermal energy has the potential to become a very significant source of emission free, renewable baseload power for centuries to come and Australia's geothermal energy resources are reported to be among the best in the world. There are currently some 19 companies exploring for geothermal resources in 143 exploration license areas across Australia.

The Committee will seek Professor Tester's advice on the opportunities for Australia to demonstrate geothermal technology and expertise to the world, given Australia's vast resources and growing expertise in the area.

The Committee's new case study continues the inquiry into the development of Australia's non-fossil fuel energy industry, referred to the Committee by the Minister for Industry, Tourism and Resources, Ian Macfarlane. The first case study for the inquiry, into the strategic importance of Australia's uranium resources, was completed by the Committee last year.

Further information on the inquiry is available on the Committee's web site:

<http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/isr/renewables/index.htm>

## Public Hearing – Wednesday, 20 June 2007

**Venue:** Committee Room 1S6, Parliament House, Canberra

**Time:** 9:00am – 10:00am, Professor Jefferson W. Tester

*The hearing will be webcast live (audio only): <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/> and broadcast internally at Parliament House, Canberra, on House Monitoring System channel 89.9.*

**For media comment**, please contact the Committee Chairman, the Hon Geoff Prosser MP, on: (02) 6277 2055 (Parliament House) or (08) 9791 1146 (Electorate Office in Bunbury, WA)

**For further information**, please contact the Inquiry Secretary on: (02) 6277 4609 or via email at [ir.reps@aph.gov.au](mailto:ir.reps@aph.gov.au)