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GM Looks to Hawaii for Hydrogen Infrastructure Pilot

Collaboration with The Gas Company Plans Stations on Oahu for Fuel Cells

Detroit/Honolulu, May 11 – Abundant hydrogen is available on the island of Oahu to power a ramp up of fuel cell vehicles through a General Motors collaboration with The Gas Company (TGC), Hawaii's major gas energy provider, the two companies announced Tuesday.

TGC produces hydrogen along with synthetic natural gas and delivers it in its utility gas stream, with more than 5 percent hydrogen content today. Through a proprietary separation process, TGC plans to tap into its 1,000-mile utility pipeline system at key locations and separate the hydrogen for use by local fueling stations for fuel cell vehicles.

"This is the type of enabler that a hydrogen transportation infrastructure needs because it addresses both the source of the hydrogen and a feasible way to deliver it for fuel cell vehicle use," said Charles Freese, executive director of GM Global Fuel Cell Activities. "The Hawaii infrastructure could eventually support tens of thousands of fuel cell vehicles.

"Hawaii is uniquely positioned and motivated to make hydrogen-powered fuel cell transportation a reality because it depends on imported petroleum for 90 percent of its energy," he said.

The state is committed to reducing petroleum use by 70 percent through a combination of renewable energy resources, conservation and efficiency. The use of hydrogen as a transportation fuel could be a key contributor.

"We have been delivering as much as 12 percent hydrogen made from renewable sources to our gas customers over the last two to three years and expect we can deliver even greater quantities of hydrogen as demand increases," said Jeffrey Kissel, president and CEO of TGC. "By delivering hydrogen through our existing infrastructure as vehicle fuel wherever we have gas, The Gas Company expands its key role of supporting Hawaii's clean energy future."

Depending how the pricing for the hydrogen is set, it could be available at the equivalent price of gasoline or less.

GM, which has invested more than \$1.5 billion in fuel cell transportation in the last 15 years, is developing a production-intent fuel cell system that could be ready for commercialization in 2015. Current Chevrolet Fuel Cell vehicles are part of Project Driveway, the world's largest demonstration of fuel cell vehicles, which has amassed nearly 1.4 million miles of real-world driving by thousands of people since 2007.

U.S. Senator Dan Inouye, D-Hawaii, said he supports the pilot project.

“My small role was one of introduction between these two companies, not that many months ago, which resulted in this business announcement today,” Inouye said. “It is an important step forward in the establishment of a hydrogen transportation infrastructure upon which new fleets, both military and civilian, can be tested and utilized. I am committed to support the resourcing of this endeavor.

“Every step to reduce our dependency on foreign oil is a move forward,” he said.

The GM-TGC collaboration is the leading edge of a broad consortium of federal and state, non-profit and education organizations that is forming to develop a Hawaii Hydrogen Initiative as part of an integrated energy solution for Hawaii’s future.

About General Motors: General Motors, one of the world’s largest automakers, traces its roots back to 1908. With its global headquarters in Detroit, GM employs 217,000 people in every major region of the world and does business in some 140 countries. GM and its strategic partners produce cars and trucks in 34 countries, and sell and service these vehicles through the following brands: Buick, Cadillac, Chevrolet, FAW, GMC, GM Daewoo, Holden, Opel, Vauxhall and Wuling. GM’s largest national market is the United States, followed by China, Brazil, Germany, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Italy. GM’s OnStar subsidiary is the industry leader in vehicle safety, security and information services. General Motors acquired operations from General Motors Corporation on July 10, 2009, and references to prior periods in this and other press materials refer to operations of the old General Motors Corporation. More information on the new General Motors can be found at www.gm.com.

About The Gas Company: The Gas Company LLC has been in business since 1904 and has a workforce of 300. It provides clean, reliable and energy-efficient gas to residential, business and government customers throughout the state of Hawaii — Oahu, Maui, Hawaii, Kauai, Molokai and Lanai. TGC manufactures synthetic natural gas (SNG) and hydrogen at its high-capacity plant located on Oahu for delivery through a 1,000-mile pipeline network, and supplies propane gas (LPG) statewide. More information on TGC is available at www.hawaiigas.com.

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