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Congress Asks Purdue for Fusion Claim Findings

By [KENNETH CHANG](#)

A Congressional committee has asked [Purdue University](#) for copies of its findings in an investigation of a Purdue scientist who claims to have generated nuclear fusion in a desktop experiment.

In a series of scientific papers beginning in 2002, the scientist, Rusi P. Taleyarkhan, said that by using sound waves he could generate temperatures hot enough for hydrogen atoms to meld and release energy, a process called fusion, similar to how the Sun makes heat and light.

Purdue investigated Dr. Taleyarkhan's work and released a statement last month saying that the inquiry had cleared the scientist of charges of research misconduct.

A lack of details in the statement, including what charges were examined, led the Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee of the House Science and Technology Committee to send a letter yesterday to Purdue's president, Martin C. Jischke, asking for copies of the findings.

"There's enough in published reports and in talk in the scientific community to raise questions," said Representative Brad Miller, the North Carolina Democrat who is chairman of the subcommittee.

In view of the billions of dollars the government spends on scientific research, Mr. Miller said, "we need to know we are getting valid sound research and not research that is being manipulated."

"We've got to count on the integrity of their reviews," he added.

A university spokesman, Joseph Bennett, said, "Purdue's plan is to work with the committee, with the intention of providing them everything that they've requested."

Mr. Miller said the subcommittee would look at the reports before deciding what to do. It could, for instance, hold hearings, but it does not have the power to impose a punishment against Purdue.

"It's about informing Congress," Mr. Miller said. "We may very well decide we may need to change the law or change the funding formula. The purpose of what we are doing now is to find out what happened."

Other researchers have been unable to reproduce Dr. Taleyarkhan's results in other laboratories, although a researcher from LeTourneau University in Longview, Tex., said he had reproduced the findings using Dr. Taleyarkhan's equipment in his laboratory at Purdue.

Researchers at U.C.L.A. have published papers arguing that what Dr. Taleyarkhan took as evidence of

fusion consisted of emissions from a piece of californium, a radioactive element stored in Dr. Taleyarkhan's laboratory.

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