

Alternative energy program in Calif. scrutinized

By Ralph Vartabedian and Evan Halper, Los Angeles Times

California is spending nearly \$15 million to build 10 hydrogen fueling stations, even though just 227 hydrogen-powered vehicles exist in the state today.

It's a hefty bet on the future, given that government officials have been trying for nine years, with little success, to get automakers to build more hydrogen cars.

The project is part of a sprawling but little-known state program that packs a powerful financial punch: It spent \$1.6 billion last year on a myriad of energy-efficiency and alternative-energy projects.

Even as California has scaled back education, law enforcement and assistance to the disabled in this era of financial stress, the energy program has continued unrestrained and is expected to grow significantly in coming years.

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