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Solar tech firms get federal boost; Products find uses in military

By [Michael Randall](#)

LAKE KATRINE — The Solar Energy Consortium and its partners are getting almost \$3 million in federal funding to continue developing solar and LED technology for the military.

Rep. Maurice Hinchey announced Monday that the House and Senate have approved \$2.8 million for the consortium partners in the 2010 defense appropriations bill, which President Barack Obama is expected to sign.

Hinchey announced the funding at Tech City, the former IBM site in the Town of Ulster that is now home to a number of solar and renewable energy companies, among others.

One of TSEC's partners, Precision Flow Technologies, based in Saugerties, will expand into a 40,000-square-foot facility in Tech City.

The company, which has 185 employees, will hire 20 new people to work at the Tech City site. And, said Hinchey, it will add another 50 to 60 employees at the Tech City site over the coming year. Much of the Saugerties operation will remain in place, too.

Precision, which will receive a share of the funding, makes tools used by another TSEC partner, C9 Corp. C9 has a contract with the Defense Department to develop semiconductors with solar and LED applications for the military.

"These applications are going to be used primarily by the military," Hinchey said. But eventually, the technology "will flow out into the private sector."

The silicon carbide-based semiconductors C9 is developing would have several uses — from powering hand-held and backpack devices for troops, to use in the drive trains of hybrid electric combat vehicles.

Hinchey now has helped secure more than \$25 million in federal funding for TSEC and its partners since the consortium was formed two years ago. Additional funding announcements in the coming weeks will bring that total to almost \$30 million.

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