May 13, 2025

The Honorable Roger Wicker
Chair, Senate Armed Services Committee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mike Rogers
Chair, House Armed Services Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member, Senate Armed Services Committee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member, House Armed Services Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Wicker, Chair Rogers, Ranking Member Reed and Ranking Member Smith:

The Nuclear Energy and National Security Coalition (NENSC)[1] and the United Coalition for Advanced Nuclear Power (UCAN Power)[2] support the 2026 federal budget increase for Department of Defense (DoD) energy dominance programs, and strongly urge Congress to fund the establishment of a technical and project support program within the DoD to accelerate the deployment of advanced nuclear technologies in support of national security and mission-critical operations. As DoD continues to expand its pursuit of nuclear energy for operational and installation energy, it is imperative that the United States maintains its strategic edge against near-peer adversaries by ensuring reliable, resilient, and scalable energy solutions.

The DoD has already taken decisive steps in advancing nuclear energy technologies, particularly through consistent funding of Project Pele and, separately, the recent announcement of vendors for the Advanced Nuclear Power Initiative (ANPI). These efforts are demonstrating the viability of Mobile Nuclear Micro-Reactors (MNRs) as a transformative capability for enhancing operational endurance, reallocating resources to warfighting, and providing resilient energy solutions for remote and mission-critical locations. The strong support for MNR deployment by Combatant Commands, including CENTCOM, NORTHCOM, SOUTHCOM, INDOPACOM, and EUCOM, underscores the strategic importance of these technologies. The DoD is further pursuing the use of micro-reactors and other advanced nuclear energy systems to provide secure resilient energy for mission critical and national security efforts at domestic installations.

Given the urgency of accelerating DoD's nuclear energy programs, we request the establishment of an Executive Agent to transition expertise and capabilities developed through Project Pele into an enduring Program of Record that will support success for all of the agencies' efforts to pursue

[1] NENSC is an independent organization of leading national security experts who recognize the essential benefits of nuclear energy to the national security of the United States. We are dedicated to expanding recognition of this interdependence among all stakeholders and promoting policies that ensure a robust U.S. nuclear energy enterprise.
[2] UCAN Power is a non-profit organization established in 2021 to advocate for the accelerated use of advanced nuclear technologies including small/micro reactors to meet global electricity demands, space energy and propulsion requirements, national security objectives, and safety standards for government and commercial applications.

the use of advanced nuclear energy technologies. This program would centralize technical and project resources, ensuring DoD can efficiently scale nuclear platforms across services. To support this initiative, we recommend an increased funding level of $100 million in FY26, with $25 million allocated to activities to designate the Executive Agent and establish a program of record, and $75 million dedicated to service-led programs integrating nuclear energy technologies.

Separately, the ANPI program - a collaboration of DoD's Defense Innovation Unit (DIU), the Army, and the Air Force - is committed to rapidly acquiring and deploying advanced commercial reactor technologies to meet the energy resilience needs of critical installations and missions in the United States. This program down selected 8 reactor developers in April 2025 to be eligible to demonstrate the ability to deliver compliant, safe, secure, and reliable nuclear power. The companies are now eligible to receive Other Transaction (OT) awards to provide commercially available dual use microreactor technology at various DoD installations to support global operations across land, air, sea, space, and cyberspace. We recommend the allocation of $150 million to the DIU account to accelerate nuclear reactor deployments on military bases.

Additionally, we urge Congress to designate nuclear energy as a covered technology under Section 903 of the FY 2024 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). Currently, nuclear energy technologies are excluded from the 31 covered technology categories, creating unnecessary barriers to DoD's ability to leverage commercial nuclear advancements. Recognizing nuclear energy as a covered technology would reduce acquisition costs, accelerate deployment, and enhance mission resilience.

Furthermore, continued investment in MNRs is vital to ensuring the successful completion of Project Pele. Funding in FY26 will support final construction and operational testing, while residual funding through FY27 and FY28 will be critical for capturing data, refining technology, and transitioning expertise to a Program of Record. A successful conclusion to Project Pele will lay the foundation for DoD's sustained leadership in advanced nuclear energy capabilities.

The growing energy demands of modern defense operations, coupled with emerging threats to energy security, necessitate an urgent and decisive congressional response. By funding a dedicated DoD program for nuclear energy integration and recognizing nuclear energy as a covered technology, Congress can ensure that our military remains at the forefront of technological superiority.

We appreciate your leadership and urge your support in advancing these critical priorities. We welcome the opportunity to discuss this further and provide additional information as needed.

Sincerely yours,

Nuclear Energy and National Security Coalition

United Coalition for Advanced Nuclear Power

Cc: Members of the Senate Armed Services Committee
Members of the House Armed Services Committee