

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

January 05, 2024

Admiral John Aquilino  
Commander, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command  
USPACOM JOPAC  
Camp H.M. Smith, HI 96861-4031

Admiral Aquilino,

We write to ask for your assessment of the strategic benefit to INDOPACOM if increased procurement of the microreactor, currently in production through the Strategic Capabilities Office Project Pele, was funded in the forthcoming Fiscal Year 2025 budget and sustained through the Future Years Defense Program. We believe the strategic and tactical value of these systems providing durable power to military facilities, long-range missile defense systems, and command and control centers is invaluable considering the operational imperatives of a contested logistics environment.

As you may already know, the contract to produce Project Pele was awarded in June of 2022 and remains on an ambitious schedule to deliver for testing at Idaho National Laboratory in less than 24 months. The reactor design is not only tactically mobile, as it is contained within four standardized 20-foot shipping containers capable for transport by C-17, but also safeguarded against contamination risks due to its revolutionary coated fuel. The potential uses for an energy source producing in excess of a Megawatt that is reliable, resilient, expeditionary and inherently safe appear obvious from our perspective, but it is unclear whether INDOPACOM's requirements generation and wargaming process have produced a similar conclusion to date.

Many of our most critical military installations in your theatre are heavily dependent upon imported fuel for their enduring energy needs. Fuel was a dominating consideration in our last great contest in the Pacific, and will likely play a similar role in any potential conflict with a well-equipped and determined adversary. It would be unwise to expend such a precious resource on demands that could be so easily met by an extremely capable and reliable alternative that is impervious to mercurial weather patterns or the perils of threatened logistical lines.

Considering the planning required for serial production of micro-nuclear reactors coupled with the lead time for fuel preparation, we would strongly encourage you to propose advance procurement funding in the upcoming Fiscal Year 2025 budget and Future Years Defense Program for additional systems, should your assessment support this conclusion.

As always, please let us know how we can best support your efforts. Thank you for your attention to this important matter and prompt reply.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert J. Wittman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

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Robert J. Wittman  
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jennifer Kiggans". The signature is more stylized and compact than the one on the left, with the initials "J.K." being clearly visible.

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Jennifer Kiggans  
Member of Congress