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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4609

May 2, 2025

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

I am requesting funding in the amount of \$2,000,000.00 for the Enhancing Nuclear Reactor Testing and Safety Through 21st Century Technologies project in fiscal year 2026.

The entity to receive this funding is Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, located at 134 Burruss Hall, 800 Drillfield Drive, Blacksburg, VA 24061.

This project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because, currently, safety and operational margins at nuclear reactors rely on a multilayered monitoring system that integrates technological and human elements. The proposed research and development of AI applications for nuclear monitoring would complement and streamline existing monitoring practices by incorporating novel detection systems, advanced physics modeling, and immersive virtual reality visualization.

Further, to maximize the utility, the monitoring system will include an interactive virtual reality immersive visualization capability. This initiative would unlock critical new capabilities for modeling various conditions within next-generation nuclear reactors, aiding in design optimization, developing prognostic tools, increasing operational efficiency, and providing an additional layer of protection at nuclear power plants. In addition to traditional reactors, such technologies would be especially valuable in the development of small modular reactors (SMRs) in terms of systems design and monitoring.

This project has a Federal nexus because it is for the purposes authorized in Section 272 of Title 15 of the United States Code (15 U.S.C. § 272).

I certify that I have no financial interest in this project, and neither does anyone in my immediate family.

Sincerely,

H. MORGAN GRIFFITH
Member of Congress