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*Washington, DC*

### **Enhancing and strengthening relations on the Hill**

Rounds on the Hill continue as President Kabua and members of his delegation meet with several members of the Senate and with other key officials of the United States (US) Government. Today, President Kabua met with Senator Wyden (D-Oregon), Senator Schatz (D-Hawaii), Senator Boozman (R-Arkansas) and Senator Duckworth (D-Illinois).

President Kabua also visited the Central Intelligence Agency headquarters in Langley, VA and the Pentagon where he met with Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III. While some discussions were specific in nature, the overall message and discussion were focused and centered on the Nuclear Legacy, Climate Change, and Compact Negotiations.

President Kabua invited them to visit the Marshall Islands to see and experience first hand impacts of climate change, impacts of the Compact in the Freely Associated States and experience the nuclear legacy. President Kabua reminded the members of the Senate and officials of the US Government that working together can achieve and accomplish many things, that the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and the US are very close friends and allies, if not, a family.

The Nuclear Legacy and Climate Change must be part of the Compact Negotiations. The Nuclear Legacy is a long standing issue that needs immediate attention while Climate Change is and presents a security risk for the Marshall Islands. The Compact must be beneficial to both sides with dignified solutions and the President has promised his countrymen and women that he will not sign on to an agreement that is not fair to the marshallese people and has no respect to the friendship that has grown over the years. The Compact Negotiations are ongoing and the Marshall Islands recognizes and appreciates the efforts and leadership of Special Presidential Envoy Yun.

Also discussed was the Supplemental Education Grant (SEG), the \$20 million tax and trade agreement, Lib Island's needs, the Kwajalein Master Plan, and the Military Use and Operating Rights Agreement (MUORA).

The day concluded with a meeting between the three Presidents of the Freely Associated States in preparation for and in anticipation of the U.S. Pacific Island Country Summit which will be held on 28 to 29 September.