

October 25, 2017

The Honorable John McCain
Chairman
Senate Committee on Armed Services
Russell Senate Building, Room 228
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mac Thornberry
Chairman
House Committee on Armed Services
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Armed Services
Russell Senate Building, Room 228
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member
House Committee on Armed Services
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen McCain and Thornberry and Ranking Members Reed and Smith:

The undersigned organizations join with the 180 U.S. Representatives and 54 U.S. Senators who recently wrote to you requesting the removal of language included in the Senate version of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that would have a detrimental impact on research at the Congressionally-Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP) at the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD).

Specifically, Sections 733, 891, 892, and 893 of the FY2018 NDAA, as approved by the Senate, would individually and collectively have the effect of restricting, if not outright prohibiting, CDMRP research on diseases and disorders that affect our nation's men and women who serve or have served in the U.S. Armed Services. These provisions would restrict the types of research that could be funded, and add burdensome contracting and auditing requirements designed for large weapons system contracts. Moreover, one of these provisions (Section 733) affects all medical research at DoD, not just the CDMRP.

These provisions will collectively have a significant impact on military readiness, as attested to by the Department of Defense. In a recent memorandum, the U.S. Army's Medical Research and Materiel Command stated that:

"This language will impact force readiness and medical providers' readiness.... Impacts on military medical training programs will negatively affect the readiness of our military health care providers."

We specifically ask that Sections 733, 891, 892, and 893 of the FY2018 Senate NDAA be excluded from any final FY2018 NDAA conference report and/or legislation. It is important to note that not one of these provisions was included as part of the House-passed FY2018 NDAA. Furthermore, an amendment that would have nullified these provisions was denied a vote on the Senate floor, despite being cosponsored by a majority of the U.S. Senate.

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We urge you to listen to the concerns of your Republican and Democratic colleagues in the House and Senate, who have been hearing from constituents across the country about the dangers that these provision pose to the continued investment in these programs. The strong level of bipartisan Congressional support for the defense health research programs is a beacon of hope to both military and non-military families who must cope with these diseases and disorders. Please honor their concerns by ensuring that these four sections are not included in the final NDAA conference agreement.

We appreciate your prompt and urgent consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

AcademyHealth
Action to Cure Kidney Cancer
Adult Congenital Heart Association
ALS Association
American Academy of Ophthalmology
American Association for Cancer Research
American Association of Cancer Institutes
American Brain Tumor Association
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American Liver Foundation
American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy
American Thoracic Society
American Urological Association
Aplastic Anemia and MDS International Foundation
Arthritis Foundation
Association of American Cancer Institutes
Association of American Universities
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Autism Speaks
Beyond Celiac
Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network
Case Western Reserve University
Children's National Health System
Children's Heart Foundation
Children's Tumor Foundation
Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation

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Citizens United for Research in Epilepsy
Coalition for National Security Research (CNSR)
Critical Mass: The Young Adult Cancer Alliance
CureHHT
Debbie's Dream Foundation: Curing Stomach Cancer
debra of America
Digestive Disease National Coalition
Dystonia Medical Research Foundation
Epilepsy Foundation
Fight Colorectal Cancer
FORCE: Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered
Foundation to Eradicate Duchenne
GBS|CIDP Foundation International
Global Health Technologies Coalition
HIV Medicine Association
Huntsman Cancer Institute at the University of Utah
Hydrocephalus Association
Indiana University
Infectious Diseases Society of America
International Foundation for Functional Gastrointestinal Disorders
International Myeloma Foundation
Interstitial Cystitis Association
Johns Hopkins University
Kidney Cancer Action Network
Kidney Cancer Association
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
Littlest Tumor Foundation
Lung Cancer Alliance
LUNgevity
Lupus Foundation of America
Lupus Research Alliance
Lymphoma Research Foundation
Malaria No More
Malecare
Marfan Foundation
Melanoma Research Foundation
METAvivor Research and Support
The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research

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Muscular Dystrophy Association
National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research
National Alliance of State Prostate Cancer Coalitions
National Association of Nurse Practitioners
 in Women's Health
National Brain Tumor Society
National Fragile X Foundation
National Kidney Foundation
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
NephCure Kidney International
Neurofibromatosis Midwest
Neurofibromatosis Network
Pancreatic Cancer Action Network
Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy
Penn State University
Phelan-McDermid Syndrome Foundation
Princeton University
Prostate Cancer Clinical Trials Consortium
Prostate Cancer Foundation
Prostate Health Education Network
Pulmonary Hypertension Association
Research!America
Restless Legs Syndrome Foundation
Scleroderma Foundation
Sergeant Sullivan Circle
Sleep Research Society
Society of Gynecologic Oncology
Susan G. Komen
Texas Neurofibromatosis Foundation
Theresa's Research Foundation
Tuberous Sclerosis Alliance
University of Central Florida
University of Iowa
University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center
University of Pittsburgh
U.S. Hereditary Angioedema Association
Us TOO Prostate Cancer Education & Support
Vanderbilt University
Vanderbilt University Medical Center

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Veterans for Common Sense
The Veterans Health Council
Vietnam Veterans of America
Wayne State University
Weill Cornell Medicine
ZERO-The End of Prostate Cancer

Enclosures:

- 1) House Letter to Chairs and Ranking Members, House and Senate Armed Services Committees, October 24, 2017
- 2) Senate Letter to Chairs and Ranking Members, House and Senate Armed Services Committees, October 10, 2017

cc: House and Senate Conferees to the fiscal year 2018, National Defense Authorization Act