

March 7, 2014

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman
Defense Subcommittee
House Committee on Appropriations
H-305, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Pete Visclosky
Ranking Member
Defense Subcommittee
House Committee on Appropriations
XXXXXX
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Frelinghuysen and Ranking Member Visclosky,

We write to respectfully request that you provide \$40 million for the Peer-Reviewed Cancer Research Program (PRCRP) in the Fiscal Year 2015 Defense Appropriations bill. We also request that you include in the list of cancers eligible to compete for this program, melanoma, pancreatic, lymphoma and colorectal cancers.

Created by Congress in Fiscal Year 2009, the PRCRP fosters groundbreaking cancer research relevant to service members and their families. Cancers eligible to compete for funding under this program since its inception have included melanoma, pediatric brain tumors, kidney cancer, colorectal cancer, pancreatic cancer, and mesothelioma. We also urge the Committee to maintain eligibility for these cancers in FY 2015.

Longitudinal studies of cancer incidence have found that cancer incidence among service members and their families differ substantially from the overall population. For example, Department of Defense-published data shows that the military population has a higher incidence of melanoma, likely due to hazardous environments and intense sun exposure during deployments.

According to projections by the Congressional Budget Office, healthcare costs for DOD will rise from \$48 billion in 2014 to \$70 billion in 2028—even after the United States reduces its military presence in Afghanistan. These high costs for medical care underscore the importance of the Department's investment in ground-breaking research that encourages better prevention, earlier detection, and more effective treatment for cancers that affect military personnel and their families.

The PRCRP already helps the military medical community better understand cancer among its patients. In recent years, the program has funded important studies that examine the impact of stress on cancer incidence and the effect of environmental exposure on families near Air Force bases. Increased funding for the PRCRP will build on this important progress and cultivate a better understanding of the unique impact of cancer on the military community.

We thank you for your consideration of this important request and would greatly appreciate your support in providing \$40 million for the Peer-Reviewed Cancer Research Program in the Fiscal Year 2015 Defense Appropriations bill.