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Senate Recommends Increased Funding for Medical Research

*Leading Nonprofits in Melanoma Applaud Allocation of New Funds,
Pledge to Advance Breakthrough Melanoma Treatments*

WASHINGTON, D.C. — On Tuesday, the Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee Chair, Sen. Richard Durbin (D-Ill.), announced the Subcommittee's recommendation for a \$25 million allocation to the Department of Defense's Peer Reviewed Cancer Research Program (PRCRP). This is the first time the Senate has slated funding for the PRCRP, which has been supported by the House in past years. The Senate recommendation prioritizes five cancers to be eligible for funding, including melanoma. In his statement today, Sen. Durbin noted the special burden melanoma, the deadliest type of skin cancer, places on members of the military.

Deeply committed to enhancing the availability of breakthrough therapies for people with melanoma, the Melanoma Research Alliance (MRA) and the Melanoma Research Foundation (MRF) and commend the Senate Subcommittee's milestone recognition of the need for further medical research to ensure that U.S. service members and citizens have access to innovative treatment options against the deadliest skin cancer. Recognizing the direct link between the incidence of melanoma among our nation's military and exposure to UV, specifically prolonged sun exposure in certain theaters, the House of Representatives' Defense Appropriations Subcommittee first allocated funds for melanoma to the DoD's PRCRP in 2009.

For the 2014 fiscal year DoD process, the House Appropriations Committee listed melanoma as one of nine other cancers eligible to compete for \$15 million in grants under the DoD's PRCRP. The Senate's proposal to increase the pool of funding and further prioritize specific cancers, including melanoma, comes at an important time for the medical research community.

The MRA and the MRF urge members of Congress to quickly adopt the Senate proposal. Investment in melanoma research will support the research community in building on recent research and treatment breakthroughs. Congressional funding through the PRCRP will also soften the blow of reductions in the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) research budget to progress in treating melanoma. The NIH's budget was cut this year by 5.1 percent amounting to a reduction of \$1.5 billion from its \$31 billion total budget.

To ensure breakthrough research around melanoma treatments progresses, the MRA and the MRF will continue working with experts in the research community to ensure that newly allocated funds are being used to the best benefit for people with melanoma, with assets afforded to the most promising research initiatives.

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About Melanoma

Melanoma is one of the fastest growing cancers in the United States and can strike men and women of all ages, all races and skin types. With a one in 50 lifetime risk of developing melanoma, nearly 77,000 Americans are expected to be diagnosed with the disease in 2013, resulting in over 9,400 deaths. Melanoma is the most common form of cancer for young adults 25- to 29-years-old and the second most common cancer in adolescents and young adults 15- to 29-years-old.

The majority of melanomas occur on the skin; in fact, melanoma is the most serious type of skin cancer. Melanoma can also occur in the eye (ocular, or uveal melanoma), in mucous membranes (mucosal melanoma), or even beneath fingernails or toenails.

About the Melanoma Research Foundation

The Melanoma Research Foundation (MRF) is the largest independent organization devoted to melanoma. Committed to the support of medical research in finding effective treatments and eventually a cure for melanoma, the MRF also educates patients and physicians about prevention, diagnosis and the treatment of melanoma. The MRF is an active advocate for the melanoma community, helping to raise awareness of this disease and the need for a cure. The MRF's website is the premier source for melanoma information seekers. More information is available at www.melanoma.org. Find the MRF on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

About the Melanoma Research Alliance

MRA is a public charity formed in 2007 under the auspices of the Milken Institute, with the generous founding support of Debra and Leon Black. MRA is poised to build on recent momentum in the field, accelerating the pace of scientific discovery and translation in order to eliminate suffering and death due to melanoma. MRA's ability to fund wide-ranging research in melanoma is amplified by unique multi-faceted collaborations and partnerships with individuals, private foundations and corporations. To date, MRA has awarded more than \$48 million to melanoma research projects worldwide. For more information, please visit www.curemelanoma.org.