



## **Congress Proposes \$80 Million for Cancer Research Funding**

WASHINGTON, DC - On June 13, 2018, the House Appropriations Committee approved its version of the Fiscal 2019 Defense Appropriations bill. Included in this legislation is \$80 million for the Department of Defense [Peer-Reviewed Cancer Research Program](#), maintaining the 2018 funding level which was the highest ever. The PRCRP is tasked with addressing cancer's impact on service members, military families and the American public by funding basic, applied and translational research for cancers including melanoma. The Melanoma Research Foundation (MRF) was instrumental in the creation of the program in 2009, and since then the PRCRP has funded over \$250 million in more than a dozen cancer types. Through a highly competitive peer review process, melanoma researchers have secured \$50 million of this funding. Most recently, the MRF partnered with the Department of Defense to develop an [instructional webinar](#) specifically for melanoma researchers to improve their chances for a successful application.

As the largest independent organization dedicated to melanoma, the MRF advocates for strong government support through programs like the PRCRP. In March, MRF volunteer advocates from across the nation came together in Washington, DC to meet with their representatives about initiatives like the PRCRP. This powerful advocacy by melanoma patients, survivors and caregivers led to a \$20 million increase in last year's budget and the MRF commends House lawmakers for maintaining this funding in 2019.

However, this House action is only a first step toward a final version of the Fiscal 2019 Defense Appropriations bill. The Senate Appropriations Committee will next consider and markup its version of a funding bill, which is expected by the last week of June. The MRF calls on the United States Senate to include this critical funding and asks community members in all 50 states to [contact their representatives](#) and urge their support.

"The life-saving research that is advanced by programs like the PRCRP is too important to be lost in political debate," says Steve Silverstein, Board Chair for the Melanoma Research Foundation. "It is essential to our community that members from both sides of the aisle support this research funding." Both Houses of Congress must now bring their respective appropriations bills to the floor, reconcile any differences and submit a final version of the bill, including this critical funding, before the new fiscal year begins on October 1, 2018.

The MRF will continue to work with the House and the Senate to preserve Department of Defense funding for melanoma research.

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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, races and skin types. In 2018, nearly 91,000 Americans are expected to be diagnosed with Stage I-IV melanoma and another 87,000 will be diagnosed with melanoma in situ – totaling over 178,000 total diagnoses. Every hour of every day, one American dies from melanoma. 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 a committed advocate for the melanoma community, helping to raise awareness of this disease and the need for a cure. The MRF's website ([www.melanoma.org](http://www.melanoma.org)) is the premier source for melanoma information seekers. Find the MRF on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).