



Melanoma Advocacy: Progress is Power

From the desk of Douglas Brodman, Board Chair:

The 118th Congress has been sworn in and the MRF is hard at work ensuring that lawmakers take full note of the issues facing the melanoma community. For the first time in three years, our annual Advocacy Days will be held in person. This important event is our opportunity as patients, healthcare providers, loved ones, researchers and survivors to speak directly with lawmakers and their staff to advocate on behalf of patients everywhere. Your advocacy has had a direct impact on funding for melanoma research and I sincerely hope you will join us in Washington, DC this year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Douglas Brodman'.

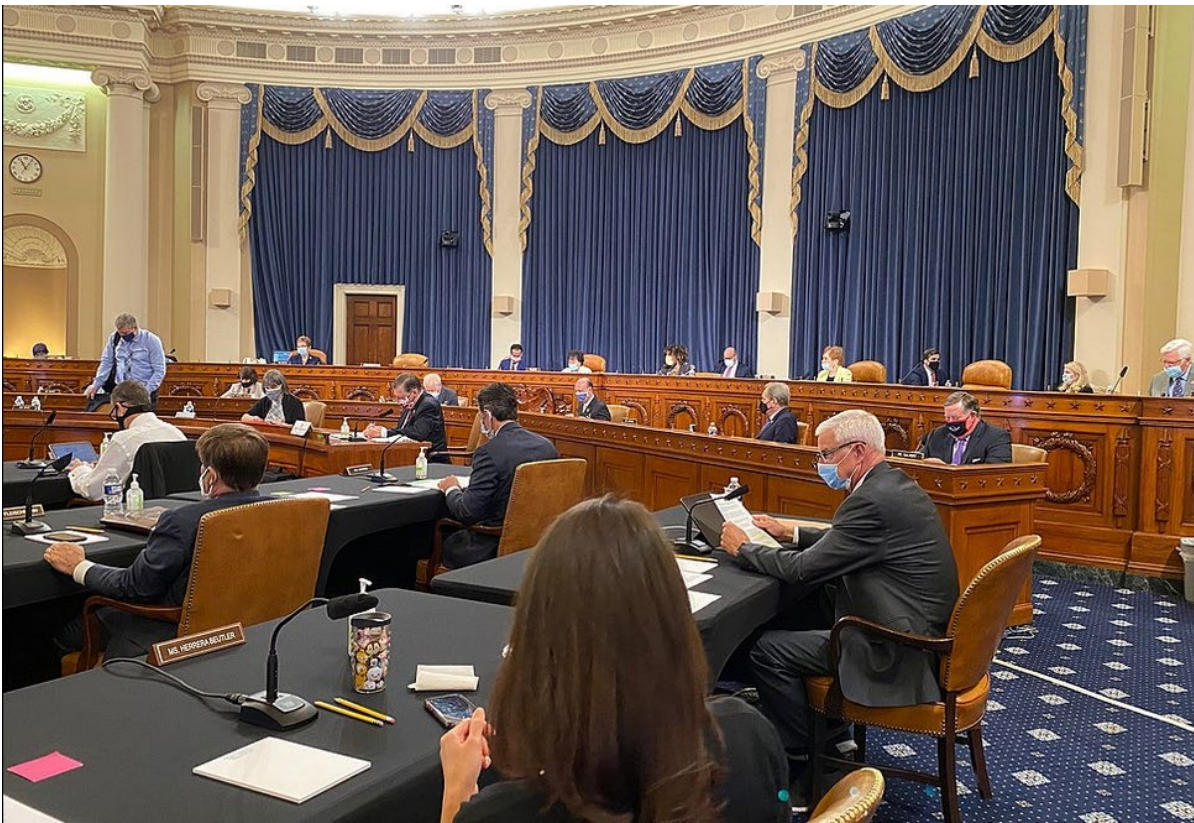
Douglas Brodman

Chair, Board of Directors



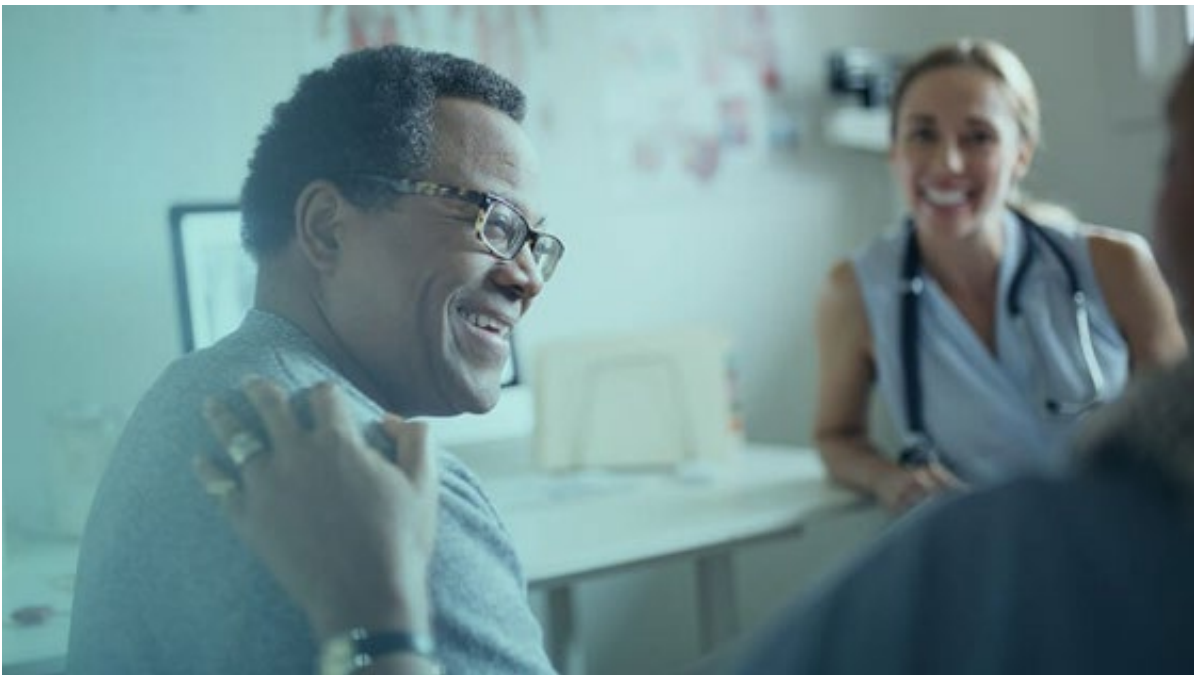
Advocacy Days: Register by February 20

The 2023 Advocacy Days registration deadline has been extended! For the first time since 2020, join the MRF in-person on March 5-7 in Washington, DC. Melanoma patients, caregivers, supporters and advocates from across the country will learn about issues facing the melanoma community, our community's key legislative priorities and then share their stories with lawmakers on Capitol Hill. [Register here](#) to join us in our nation's capital to be the voice of the melanoma community!



Congress Passes FY2023 Omnibus Bill

On December 23, Congress voted on the omnibus bill to fund the government for fiscal year 2023. Several key issues affecting the melanoma community were included in the bill. Of note, the Melanoma Research Program (MRP), which receives funding under the defense-funded Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP), received \$40 million in dedicated funding. In addition to this important research, the omnibus continues Medicare's expanded access to telehealth by extending COVID-19 telehealth flexibilities for an additional two years, through December 31, 2024. The omnibus also provided a \$1 million increase to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) skin cancer education and prevention program, for a total of \$5 million. The accompanying report encouraged the CDC to partner with local governments, business, health, education, community, non-profit, and faith-based sectors as they develop their programming. Lastly, the omnibus requires the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to take action on items intended to modernize and promote clinical trial diversity.



MRF Responds to CMS Over National Database for Healthcare Providers and Services

On December 6, the MRF responded to a request for information (RFI) issued by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on the issue of a centralized national database for healthcare providers and services. The MRF expressed the myriad ways that information transparency is beneficial to melanoma patients and encouraged CMS to keep patients at the forefront of any national directory goals. Of note, the MRF stressed how a national directory would be of great utility and benefit to rural patients and those with rare melanoma subtypes in particular, and that a directory accessible to both patients and providers could help facilitate a functional care continuum that delivers patient-centric care.



Sign On Letters with Advocacy Partners

The MRF is proud to partner with organizations and alliances to amplify the voice of the melanoma community and advance initiatives to improve the lives of patients and caregivers. Read below to learn more about three recent initiatives that we supported through sign on letters:

Encouraging the Senate to Formally Authorize the VA Office of Research and Development:

On December 7, the MRF joined allies in the Friends of VA coalition to encourage Senators Tester and Moran of the Senate Committee on Veteran's Affairs to pass the VA Infrastructure Powers Exceptional Research Act of 2021, or VIPER Act (H.R. 5721). The VIPER Act, which passed the House in November, would clarify VA authority and add resources to improve the functionality and efficiency of the VA Medical and Prosthetic Research program, including formally authorizing VA's Office of Research and Development. Importantly, the VIPER Act would allow critical research affiliations between VA medical centers and specific partner organizations to continue without disruption.

Joining 119 Patient Advocates in Support of CDMRP Funding for FY2023:

Together with allies in the Defense Health Research Consortium (DHRC), the MRF urged House and Senate leadership to finalize the fiscal year 2023 Defense Appropriations Act and ensure full funding levels for the Defense Health Research Programs, including the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP).

Urging Congress to Fund Cancer Research in FY2023:

As a member of One Voice Against Cancer (OVAC), the MRF along with other coalition members representing millions of cancer patients, researchers, providers, survivors, and their families urged bipartisan leadership of both the House and Senate Appropriations Committees on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies to finalize the fiscal year 2023 appropriations package and ensure that life-saving research conducted at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) is fully funded for the upcoming year. The coalition also recommended that Congress increase funding for the National Skin Cancer Prevention and Education Program to \$5 million.



Upcoming Advocacy Events

Stay tuned for updates about new learning modules, advocacy alerts, calls to action and more. Make sure to be the first to know the latest news in melanoma advocacy by signing up to be an [MRF Advocate](#) today!

1420 K Street, NW 7th Floor Washington, DC 20005 | Tel: (800) 673-1290
Melanoma Research Foundation © 2023 All rights reserved.

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Donate](#) | [Forward to a friend](#) | [Visit our website](#)

