

October 6, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McCarthy, and Minority Leader McConnell:

We, the undersigned organizations urge you to work toward the enactment of the fiscal year 2022 Defense Appropriations Act, to ensure that the Defense Health Research Programs, including the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP), are fully funded in fiscal year 2022.

Our organizations appreciate recent actions by Congress to pass a short-term continuing resolution to extend federal agencies and programs through December 3, 2021. However, we are particularly concerned about the possibility of Congress enacting a year-long continuing resolution in lieu of completing the fiscal year 2022 Defense Appropriations Act. Under a year-long continuing resolution **the CDMRP would receive no funding in fiscal year 2022**. Failure to enact the Defense Appropriations Act will have major negative health implications for the millions of Americans – especially veterans, military service members and their families – who live with chronic and debilitating disorders. This will delay important new discoveries and translation of medical innovation into new treatments and cures for many disorders.

We collectively represent millions of American veterans, military retirees, military families, and civilians who benefit from the ongoing research funded by the Defense Health Research Programs at the Department of Defense (DoD). We have worked tirelessly to advocate for continued funding for the programs, and we were pleased to see that the House version of the fiscal year 2022 Defense Appropriations Act includes strong funding levels for medical research.

The Defense Health Research Programs will be unable to fully prepare for the fiscal year 2022 grant solicitation process until they receive a fully-enacted fiscal year 2022 budget. The CDMRP annually receives more than 12,000 pre-applications and 7,000 full applications for grants and undergoes a rigorous process to evaluate and fund the best of these applications. Further delay in enacting the fiscal year 2022 appropriations bill will create unnecessary disruption with internal processes at DoD.

These delays will have systemic impacts on the way the DoD convenes programmatic panels to identify and implement programmatic changes and peer-review panels to provide thorough review of grant applications, and ultimately impact the ability of the DoD to conduct appropriate negotiations to award fiscal year 2022 grants. Further, failure to enact a fully-funded fiscal year 2022 budget will compromise the ability of scientific laboratories across the U.S to effectively plan and prepare the highest quality grant applications, potentially diminishing opportunities to maintain discovery-based research programs and disrupting critical scientific workforces.

The CDMRP is a critical component of the Defense Appropriations Act, and failure to enact this legislation will have a devastating impact on the program. Aside from the obvious biomedical and economic consequences of such actions, such as stalling or eliminating the critical development of new and more effective therapies that lower costs and save lives, failure to enact will interrupt important pipelines that have allowed investigators at U.S. medical research institutions to build careers and act on new and innovative medical research ideas.

We therefore urge you to work together in a bipartisan, bicameral spirit and enact the fiscal year 2022 Defense Appropriations Act.

Sincerely,

ALS Association
American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology
American Academy of Dermatology Association
American Academy of Neurology
American Association for Cancer Research
American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research
American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association
American Brain Tumor Association
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Rheumatology
American Gastroenterological Association
American Psychological Association
American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy
American Urological Association
Aplastic Anemia and MDS International Foundation
APS Foundation of America, Inc
Arthritis Foundation
Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization

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Association of American Cancer Institutes
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Beyond Celiac
Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network
Blue Faery: The Adrienne Wilson Liver Cancer Association
Buoniconti Fund to Cure Paralysis
Cancer ABCs
Celiac Disease Foundation
Children's Cardiomyopathy Foundation
Children's Tumor Foundation
Cholangiocarcinoma Foundation
Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation
Coalition for National Security Research (CNSR)
Colorectal Cancer Alliance
Crohn's & Colitis Foundation
CURE Epilepsy
Cure HHT
Deadliest Cancers Coalition
Debbie's Dream Foundation: Curing Stomach Cancer
Duke Health
Duke University
Dup15q Alliance
Epilepsy Foundation
Epilepsy Leadership Council
Esophageal Cancer Action Network
FD/MAS Alliance
Fight Colorectal Cancer
FORCE – Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered
Foundation to Eradicate Duchenne
Global Health Technologies Coalition (GHTC)
Global Liver Institute
GO2 Foundation for Lung Cancer
Hepatitis B Foundation
HIV Medicine Association
Hope for Stomach Cancer
Hydrocephalus Association
Indiana University
Infectious Diseases Society of America
International Foundation for CDKL5 Research
International Myeloma Foundation
International Pemphigus and Pemphigoid Foundation
Johns Hopkins University

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KidneyCAN
Kidney Cancer Association
The LAM Foundation
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
Living Beyond Breast Cancer
LUNGeivity Foundation
Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc.
Lupus Foundation of America
Lupus Research Alliance
Malecare Cancer Support
Melanoma Research Foundation
Men's Health Network
Mesothelioma Applied Research Foundation
Miami Project to Cure Paralysis
The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research
National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research
National Alliance of State Prostate Cancer Coalitions
National Autism Association
National Brain Tumor Society
National Fragile X Foundation
National MS Society
Neurofibromatosis Midwest
Neurofibromatosis Network
Neurofibromatosis Northeast
North American Spinal Cord Injury Consortium
Northeastern University
Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance
Pancreatic Cancer Action Network
Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy
PKD Foundation
Prostate Cancer Clinical Trials Consortium (PCCTC)
Prostate Cancer Foundation
Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation
Quinism Foundation
Scleroderma Foundation
Sgt. Sullivan Circle
SHEPHERD Foundation
Society of Gynecologic Oncology
Society for Neuroscience
Solve M.E.
St. Baldrick's Foundation

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Susan G. Komen
Texas NF Foundation
TSC Alliance
University of Iowa
Vasculitis Foundation
Veterans for Common Sense
VHL Alliance
Vietnam Veterans of America
Weill Cornell Medicine
ZERO-The End of Prostate Cancer

cc: House and Senate Committee on Appropriations