November 26, 2025

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House
Washington, DC 20515

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

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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

Dear Speaker Johnson, Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader Jeffries, and Minority Leader McConnell:

We, the undersigned organizations, urge you to work toward the enactment of the fiscal year 2025 Defense Appropriations Act, to ensure full funding levels for the Defense Health Research Programs, including the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP). We collectively represent millions of American active duty military service members, veterans, military families and retirees, and civilians who benefit from the ongoing research funded by the CDMRP.

Our organizations appreciate actions by Congress to pass a short-term continuing resolution to extend federal agencies and programs through December 20, 2024. However, we are particularly concerned about the possibility of Congress enacting additional short-term continuing resolutions that would delay final consideration of the appropriations bills until next year. Even worse, a period of government shutdown would completely halt all operations of CDMRP and be highly disruptive to plans for soliciting, reviewing and evaluating grant applications and administering existing awards.

Failure to enact the Defense Appropriations Act this year will have major negative health implications for the millions of Americans – especially veterans, military service members and their families – who live with infection-associated, chronic and debilitating disorders. Further delay will impede important new discoveries and translation of medical innovation into new treatments and cures for many disorders.

Every year, CDMRP engages in a rigorous process of vision setting, solicitation of proposals, and a two-step peer and programmatic review of applications submitted for consideration. 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 2025 Defense Appropriations Act 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 2025 grants.

Further, failure to enact a fully-funded fiscal year 2025 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 programs. 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 legislation 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 2025 Defense Appropriations Act.

Sincerely,

LAST YEAR'S COSIGNERS:

ALS Association
American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology (AAAAI)
American Academy of Dermatology Association
American Academy of Neurology
American Academy of Ophthalmology
American Association for Cancer Research
American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research
American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons
American Brain Tumor Association
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN)
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Rheumatology
American Gastroenterological Association
American Lung Association
American Psychological Association
American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy
American Society of Hematology
American Urological Association
Aplastic Anemia & MDS International Foundation
APS Foundation of America, Inc
Asbestos Disease Awareness Org (ADAO)
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
Brown University
Buoniconti Fund to Cure Paralysis
Cancer ABCs
Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine
Celiac Disease Foundation
Children's Tumor Foundation
Cholangiocarcinoma Foundation
Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation
Coalition for National Security Research (CNSR)
Connect Melanoma
COVID-19 Longhauler Advocacy Project
Crohn's & Colitis Foundation
CTNNB1 Connect & Cure
CURE Epilepsy
CureSHANK
Danny Did Epilepsy Foundation
Deadliest Cancers Coalition
Debbie’s Dream Foundation: Curing Stomach Cancer
DLG4 Research Fund
Duke Health
Duke University
Dup15q Alliance
dystrophic epidermolysis bullosa research association of America (debra of America)
ECAN Esophageal Cancer Action Network
Epilepsies Action Network (EAN)
Epilepsy Alliance America
Epilepsy Foundation
FAM177A1 Research Fund
FD/MAS Alliance
Fibroid Foundation
Fight Colorectal Cancer
FORCE: Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered
Foundation for Peripheral Neuropathy
Foundation to Eradicate Duchenne
GO2 for Lung Cancer
Hepatitis B Foundation
HIV Medicine Association
Hydrocephalus Association
Immune Deficiency Foundation
Indiana University
Infectious Diseases Society
International Myeloma Foundation
International Pemphigus Pemphigoid Foundation

Johns Hopkins University
Kidney Cancer Association
KidneyCAN
Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome (LGS) Foundation
Littlest Tumor Foundation
Living Beyond Breast Cancer
LUNGevity Foundation
Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc.
Lupus Foundation of America
Lupus Research Alliance
Malecare Cancer Support
Melanoma Research Foundation
Mesothelioma Applied Research Foundation
Miami Project to Cure Paralysis
Michigan State University
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 Multiple Sclerosis Society
National Organization for Rare Disorders
National Pancreas Foundation
National Scleroderma Foundation
Neurofibromatosis Midwest
Neurofibromatosis Network
Neurofibromatosis Northeast
North American Spinal Cord Injury Consortium (NASCIC)
Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance
Pancreatic Cancer Action Network (PanCAN)
Pandemic Patients
Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy
Penn State University
Project 8P Foundation
Prostate Cancer Clinical Trials Consortium (PCCTC)
Prostate Cancer Foundation
Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation
Rare Epilepsy Network (REN)
Research!America
Sergeant Sullivan Circle
SHEPHERD Foundation
Sjogren's Foundation
Solve M.E.
St. Baldrick's Foundation
Susan G. Komen
Syngap Research Fund

SYNGAP1 Foundation
Texas NF Foundation
The LAM Foundation
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research
The Quinism Foundation
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons
TSC Alliance
University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus
University of North Carolina System
University of Rochester
Vasculitis Foundation
Veterans for Common Sense
VHL Alliance
Weill Cornell Medicine
ZERO Prostate Cancer

cc: House and Senate Committees on Appropriations