November 19, 2026

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

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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

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

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

We, the undersigned organizations, urge you to work toward the enactment of the fiscal year (FY) 2027 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 veterans, military retirees, military families, and civilians who benefit from the ongoing research funded by the CDMRP.

With few remaining weeks left before expiration of the current Continuing Resolution (CR), we are particularly concerned about the possibility of Congress enacting a year-long CR in lieu of a final Defense Appropriations bill. The FY2025 Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, enacted March 15, 2025, led to devastating consequences, resulting in a 57 percent cut to CDMRP programs below FY2024-enacted funding levels. As a result, 23 of the 35 CDMRP programs received no funding in FY2025.[1] Thankfully, Congress did enact a final defense bill in FY2026 as part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act enacted on February 2, 2026. While this legislation didn't fully restore CDMRP to its FY2024 level, it did appropriate $1.27 billion for the program – substantially higher than the FY2025 level. Another long-term CR would risk repeating or even worsening the FY2025 cuts, undermining the vital research that directly benefits the health of the men and women who serve in the U.S. Armed Services.

Failure to enact the FY2027 Defense Appropriations Act this year will have serious health consequences for millions of Americans — especially current and former military service members and their families — who live with chronic and debilitating disorders. Further delay will impede critical new discoveries and slow the translation of promising medical innovations into new treatments and cures that could greatly improve or even save lives.

[1] Programs that received no funding in FY25: Alcohol and Substance Abuse Disorder, Arthritis, Autism, Bone Marrow Failure Disease, Combat Readiness Medical, Epilepsy, Hearing Restoration, Glioblastoma, Joint Warfighter Medical, Kidney Cancer, Lung Cancer, Lupus, Multiple Sclerosis, Neurofibromatosis, Orthopaedic, Pancreatic Cancer, Parkinson's Disease, Reconstructive Transplant, Spinal Cord Injury, Tick-Borne Disease, TBI and Psychological Health, Tuberous Sclerosis Complex, Vision.

Each year, CDMRP engages in a rigorous process of strategic vision setting, proposal solicitations, and a two-step peer and programmatic review of applications to identify and fund the most promising research proposals. The CDMRP annually receives more than 12,000 pre-applications and 7,000 full applications for grants, which undergo both a peer and programmatic review to ensure that only the highest-quality, most innovative projects are selected for funding. Further delays in enacting the FY2027 Defense Appropriations Act will severely disrupt this process. Such delays will adversely impact the Department of Defense's ability to conduct thorough peer-reviewed scientific reviews of grant applications and timely negotiations to award FY2027 grants.

Failure to pass a fully funded fiscal year 2027 budget will also compromise the ability of research institutions and laboratories nationwide to effectively plan, prepare and execute the highest quality grant applications. This uncertainty threatens to stall discovery-based research, destabilize critical scientific workforces, and weaken the nation's position as a global leader in biomedical innovation.

The CDMRP is a cornerstone of the Defense Appropriations Act, and failure to enact this legislation will have a devastating impact on these programs. Aside from the obvious biomedical and economic consequences of such actions, failure to enact legislation will interrupt important pipelines that have allowed investigators at U.S. medical research institutions to maintain our leadership as the best in the world as well as build careers and implement new and innovative medical research. Inaction risks halting the development of new therapies that improve outcomes, reducing long-term health costs, and saving lives. It will also disrupt vital research pipelines that enable U.S. investigators to pursue bold, innovative ideas and build lasting scientific careers.

We therefore urge Congress to act swiftly and work together in a bipartisan, bicameral spirit to enact the FY2027 Defense Appropriations Act, ensuring that this essential research continues to advance the health and readiness of all Americans.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Vision Research
ALS Association
ALS Arizona
ALS Network
ALS New Mexico
ALS Northwest

ALS of Nevada
ALS United
ALS United Connecticut
ALS United of Georgia
ALS United Greater New York
ALS United Illinois, Indiana & Missouri
ALS United Mid-Atlantic
ALS United North Carolina
ALS United Ohio
ALS United Orange County
ALS United Rhode Island
ALS United Rocky Mountain
American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology
American Academy of Ophthalmology
American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons
American Brain Tumor Association
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American College of Rheumatology
American Epilepsy Society
American Gastroenterological Association
American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy
American Society of Hematology
American Urological Association (AUA)
Angelman Syndrome Foundation
Aplastic Anemia & MDS International Foundation
APS Foundation of America, Inc
Arthritis Foundation
Association for Clinical Oncology (ASCO)
Association of American Cancer Institutes
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Blood Cancer United
Brain Inflammation Collaborative
CACNA1A Foundation
Cancer Support Community
Celiac Disease Foundation
Child Neurology Foundation
Children’s Cardiomyopathy Foundation
Children's Tumor Foundation
Cholangiocarcinoma Foundation
Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation
Coalition for National Trauma Research
Colorectal Cancer Alliance
Connect Melanoma
Crohn's & Colitis Foundation
CSNK2A1 Foundation
CURE Epilepsy

Cure HHT
Cure SMA
Deadliest Cancers Coalition
Debbie's Dream Foundation: Curing Stomach Cancer (DDF)
Debra of America
Defense Health Research Consortium
Dravet Syndrome Foundation
Duke Health
Duke University
Dysautonomia International
Epilepsy Alliance America
Epilepsy Foundation of America
Esophageal Cancer Action Network (ECAN)
Every 100th Heart
FDMAS Alliance
Ferrell Foundation
Fight Colorectal Cancer
Food Allergy Science Initiative
FORCE: Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered
Foundation for Angelman Syndrome Therapeutics
Foundation for Peripheral Neuropathy
Foundation to Eradicate Duchenne
Friedreich’s Ataxia Research Alliance (FARA)
GBS|CIDP Foundation International
GO2 for Lung Cancer
Hope for HIE
Hope for Stomach Cancer
Hydrocephalus Association
International myeloma foundation
International Pemphigus and Pemphigoid Foundation
Interstitial Cystitis Association
Invisible Wounds Foundation
Johns Hopkins University & Medicine
Kidney Cancer Association
KidneyCAN
Littlest Tumor Foundation
LUNGevity Foundation
Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc.
Lupus Foundation of America
Lupus Research Alliance
Lymphatic Education & Research Network
Lymphoma Research Foundation
MEF2C Family Foundation
Melanoma Research Foundation
METAvivor
Michigan State University

National Alliance of State Prostate Cancer Coalitions
National Ataxia Foundation
National Autism Association
National Brain Tumor Society
National Fragile X Foundation
National Health Council
National Kidney Foundation
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
National Psoriasis Foundation
National Scleroderma Foundation
Neurofibromatosis Network
NF Midwest
NF Northeast
North American Spinal Cord Injury Consortium
Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance
Pancreatic Cancer Action Network (PanCAN)
Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy
Patient-Led Research Collaborative
Paul's Purple Warrior
Penn State University
PKD Foundation
Prevent Cancer Foundation
Prostate Cancer Education Council
Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation
Rally Foundation for Childhood Cancer Research
Rare Epilepsy Network (REN)
ReNU2 Foundation
Research!America
Ring 20 USA
SHEPHERD Foundation
Society for the Study of Celiac Disease
Solve M.E.
SSADH Association
Susan G. Komen
TargetCancer Foundation
TB Alliance
Texas Neurofibromatosis Foundation
The Cute Syndrome Foundation
The LAM Foundation
The Mesothelioma Foundation
The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research
The Myositis Association (TMA)
The Prostate Cancer Clinical Trials Consortium
The Quinism Foundation
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons
Theresa’s Research

TSC Alliance
Unite 2 Fight Paralysis
United Ostomy Associations of America, Inc.
University of Cincinnati
University of Colorado Anschutz
University of Virginia
Vasculitis Foundation
Veterans for Common Sense
VHL Alliance
Washington State University
Weill Cornell Medicine
ZERO Prostate Cancer

cc: House and Senate Committees on Appropriations