

June 1, 2016

The Honorable John McCain
United States Senator
Chair
Senate Committee on Armed Services
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed
United States Senator
Ranking Minority Member
Senate Committee on Armed Services
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman McCain and Ranking Member Reed,

The undersigned organizations and institutions write in opposition to Sections 756 and 898 of S. 2943, the fiscal year 2017 National Defense Authorization Act, which would prohibit funding for medical research at the Department of Defense (DoD) unless such research meets certain narrowly defined criteria related to military relevance. We urge you to support amendments that we expect to be offered during Senate floor consideration that would strike this language from the bill.

We oppose Section 756 because it is unnecessary and, if enacted, could jeopardize funding for research activities that have broader relevance to the U.S. military, including the health and well-being of military families and veterans, and the efficiency of the military health care system. We oppose Section 898 because it would place unnecessary and burdensome acquisition compliance and auditing requirements on programs that are already serving the taxpayer well.

The medical research programs at DoD directly impact the health and lives of the U.S. military, including combat veterans and their families. They include important medical research programs related to several forms of cancer and other disorders. Grants awarded through these programs have led to breakthroughs on nerve regeneration and traumatic brain injury (TBI) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) – key developments favorably impacting our newest wounded warriors. Other programs provide groundbreaking research on psychological health, Gulf War Illness, spinal cord injury, and hearing and vision loss (which comprise a significant portion of current battlefield injuries). Many of these diseases occur at greater rates in those who have served in the military.

Defense health research grants undergo rigorous merit review from both scientific and consumer review panels, and are awarded competitively based in large part on their innovative qualities as well as scientific merit and relevance to the U.S. military.

During floor consideration of S. 2943, we urge the Senate to support amendments to strike this language from the bill and also support continued investments in the medical research programs at DoD.

Letter to Senate Armed Services Committee
June 1, 2016
Page 2

Sincerely,

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
Action to Cure Kidney Cancer
Adult Congenital Heart Association
Alliance for Lupus Research/Lupus Research Institute
ALS Association
Alzheimer's Association
American Academy of Dermatology Association
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association for Cancer Research
American Association for Dental Research
American Association of Clinical Urologists
American Brain Tumor Association
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American Dental Association
American Diabetes Association
American Gastroenterological Association
American Heart Association
American Lung Association
American Psychological Association
American Society of Nephrology
American Thoracic Society
American Urological Association
Aplastic Anemia and MDS International Foundation
Arthritis Foundation
Association of American Cancer Institutes
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of American Universities
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Autism Speaks
Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network
Cancer Support Community
Caring Together New York
Children's Heart Foundation
Children's Tumor Foundation
Citizens United for Research in Epilepsy (CURE)
Coalition for National Security Research (CNSR)
Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory

Letter to Senate Armed Services Committee
June 1, 2016
Page 3

Colon Cancer Alliance
Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America
CureHHT
Debbie's Dream Foundation: Curing Stomach Cancer
Digestive Disease National Coalition
Duke University
Duke University School of Medicine
Dystonia Medical Research Foundation
Endocrine Society
Esophageal Cancer Action Network, Inc.
Fight Colorectal Cancer
FORCE: Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered
Foundation for Women's Cancer
Foundation to Eradicate Duchenne
Georgetown University
GBS|CIDP Foundation International
Hartford HealthCare Center
Hepatitis Foundation International
Hydrocephalus Association
Indiana University
International Foundation for Functional GI Disorders
International Myeloma Foundation
Interstitial Cystitis Association
Johns Hopkins University
Kidney Cancer Association
LAM Foundation
Lineberger Clinic Cancer Center at the University of North Carolina
Littlest Tumor Foundation
Living Beyond Breast Cancer
Lung Cancer Alliance
Lupus Foundation of America
Lymphangiomatosis & Gorham's Disease Alliance
Lymphoma Research Foundation
Malecare Cancer Support
Melanoma Research Foundation
The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research
Michigan State University
Minnesota Ovarian Cancer Alliance
Muscular Dystrophy Association
National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research
National Association of Nurse Practitioners In Women's Health
National Autism Association

Letter to Senate Armed Services Committee
June 1, 2016
Page 4

National Fragile X Foundation
National Gulf War Resource Center
National Kidney Foundation
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
National Ovarian Cancer Coalition
NephCure Kidney International
Neurofibromatosis Arizona
Neurofibromatosis Central Plains
Neurofibromatosis Michigan
Neurofibromatosis (NF) Midwest
Neurofibromatosis Network
Neurofibromatosis Northeast
Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health
The Ohio State University
Oncology Nursing Society
Ovarian Cancer Research Fund Alliance
Pancreatic Cancer Action Network
Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy (PPMD)
Pediatric Congenital Heart Association
Penn State University
Prostate Cancer Foundation
Prostate Health Education Network
Pulmonary Hypertension Association
Research!America
Rettsyndrome.org
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Scleroderma Foundation
Sleep Research Society
Society of Gynecologic Oncology
St. Baldrick's Foundation
State University of New York
Susan G. Komen
Texas Neurofibromatosis Foundation
Theresa's Research Foundation
Tuberous Sclerosis Alliance
University of Arizona Cancer Center at Dignity Health St. Joseph's
Hospital and Medical Center
University of California-Irvine
University of California System
University of Central Florida
University of Kansas
University of Kansas Medical Center

Letter to Senate Armed Services Committee
June 1, 2016
Page 5

University of Pittsburgh
University of Washington
University of Wisconsin-Madison
US Hereditary Angioedema Association
Us TOO International Prostate Cancer Education and Support Network
The V Foundation for Cancer Research
Vanderbilt University
Veterans for Common Sense
Veterans Health Council
Vietnam Veterans of America
Washington State Neurofibromatosis Families
Weill Cornell Medicine
WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease
Young Survival Coalition
ZERO-The End of Prostate Cancer

cc: United States Senators

Contact: Mark Vieth, Coordinator, Defense Health Research Consortium, (202) 484-1100,
mvieth@dc-crd.com