

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 25, 2017

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Defense Appropriations Subcommittee
S-128 Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dick Durbin
Ranking Member
Defense Appropriations Subcommittee
S-146A Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran and Ranking Member Durbin:

Over the course of this coming year, more than 160,000 American men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer, and it is estimated that over 26,000 more will die as a result of the disease. As you formulate the Fiscal Year 2018 Department of Defense Appropriations Act over the coming months, we respectfully request that you include robust funding for the Department of Defense (DOD) Peer-Reviewed Prostate Cancer Research Program (PCRP).

Federal funding for prostate cancer research has accounted for just an average of 5 percent of the national annual cancer research budget, despite the fact that it is responsible for 19 percent of all new cancer cases and 9 percent of all cancer deaths in men. This is especially troubling due to a recent trend of declining prostate cancer screenings for men. This year, it is estimated that an additional 610 men will die from prostate cancer compared to 2016, in part due to a lack of proper testing that would catch otherwise treatable forms of the disease. Given the burden of disease and rising number of deaths, it is clear that the federal commitment to prostate cancer research remains an important and necessary tool to save lives.

Since 1996, the Committee has funded prostate cancer research through the DOD Congressional Directed Medical Research Program's PCRP. The PCRP strives to identify new prostate cancer biomarkers to improve early diagnosis of the disease and accelerate the development of new precision treatments. The DOD utilizes a unique approach to biomedical research that incorporates survivors to help develop program priorities and, unlike other agencies, employs a two-tier review process to ensure that funded research is advancing knowledge in the highest priority science areas. The focus areas for funded research include biomarker development, genetics, imaging, mechanisms of resistance, survivorship and palliative care, therapy, and tumor and microenvironment biology. New therapies tracing their origins to the PCRP are saving the lives of men today, but too many men continue to die of this disease.

We are hopeful you will continue to make prostate cancer research, detection, and treatment a priority for the subcommittee as you consider the FY18 Defense Appropriations Act. We understand the difficult task ahead of you as you work to prioritize the many needs of our nation, and we greatly appreciate your consideration of this request.

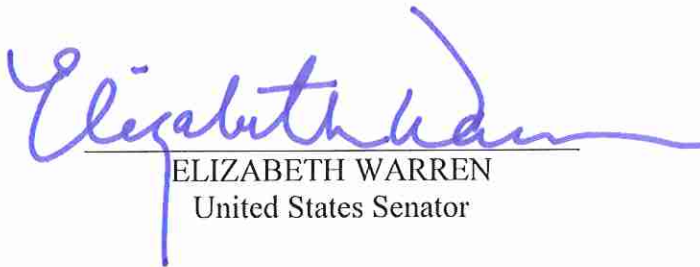
Sincerely,



ROBERT MENENDEZ
United States Senator



MIKE CRAPO
United States Senator



ELIZABETH WARREN
United States Senator



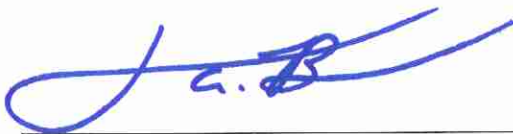
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