

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 12, 2019

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
Defense Appropriations Subcommittee
S-128 Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

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

Dear Chairman Shelby and Ranking Member Durbin:

This year, over 174,000 men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer, and it is estimated that more than 31,000 men will die from this disease. As you consider the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Defense Appropriations Act, we respectfully request that the Committee provide robust funding for the Department of Defense's (DOD's) Prostate Cancer Research Program (PCRP).

After more than two decades of falling, prostate cancer deaths are now on the rise. When caught early, prostate cancer has a nearly one hundred percent five-year survival rate. However, if it has metastasized the survival rate drops to 30 percent. It is estimated that 2,000 more men will die this year than in 2018 of prostate cancer. And that number reflects an increase of 5,300 more deaths when compared to 2017. Now more than ever we need research to better detect, diagnose, and treat prostate cancer.

Since 1996, the Committee has been instrumental in advancing prostate cancer research by funding the DOD's Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP) for prostate cancer. Its administrative structure has demonstrated an ability to be flexible and quickly adjust responses to changing medical research needs and priorities. The PCRP, which compliments larger NIH basic science efforts, is the gold standard in prostate cancer research and an integral weapon in the national fight against prostate cancer.

Unlike the NIH, PCRP has clear priorities each year that target gaps in prostate cancer diagnostics, care, and treatment with an emphasis on meeting the needs of the prostate cancer community. The programmatic review of all proposals ensures that the government is not spending scarce dollars on duplicative research. This structure works. In the last eight years, the PCRP has produced three new treatments for metastatic prostate cancer and one new advanced diagnostic.

Not only is the PCRP effective, it is military relevant. Prostate cancer is the most frequently diagnosed cancer among veteran men and active duty men have an incidence rate that is twice that of the general population. Between 2005 and 2014, prostate cancer accounted for 11.7 percent of cancer diagnoses in active duty men. In addition, it is well known that cancer diagnoses among service members or their families have a negative impact on psychological health and military readiness.

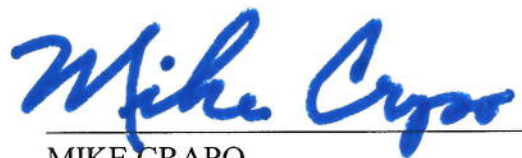
For these reasons, we respectfully request that the Committee provide a robust level of funding for the PCRP program within the FY2020 appropriation for CDMRP. In FY2019, the Committee provided \$100 million for this vital program and researchers used this funding to develop treatments that improve outcomes for men with lethal prostate cancer; reduce lethal prostate cancer in African Americans, Veterans, and other high-risk populations; define the biology of lethal prostate cancer to reduce death; and, improve the quality of life for survivors of prostate cancer. With robust funding in FY2020, researchers will be able to build on this important work.

Please join us in making prostate cancer research, awareness and early detection a national health care priority by ensuring that adequate resources are available for the DOD PCRP. We recognize the difficult task ahead of your subcommittee in setting priorities among the many needs of our nation, but we appreciate your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



ROBERT MENENDEZ
United States Senator



MIKE CRAPO
United States Senator



MARTIN HEINRICH
United States Senator



SUSAN M. COLLINS
United States Senator



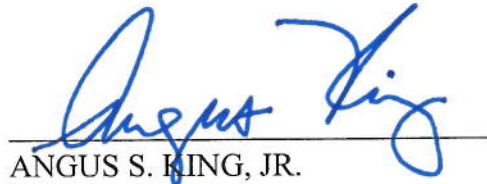
RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
United States Senator



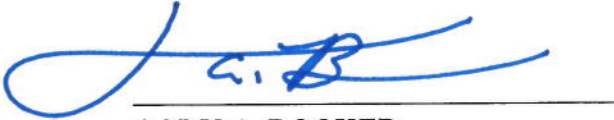
DEBBIE STABENOW
United States Senator



GARY C. PETERS
United States Senator



ANGUS S. KING, JR.
United States Senator



CORY A. BOOKER
United States Senator



ELIZABETH WARREN
United States Senator



CHRIS VAN HOLLEN
United States Senator



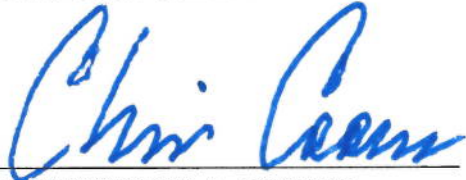
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United States Senator



KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND
United States Senator



KYRSTEN SINEMA
United States Senator



CHRISTOPHER A. COONS
United States Senator



KAMALA D. HARRIS
United States Senator



DOUG JONES
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Tammy Duckworth". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right from the end of the name.

Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator