March 16, 2018

The Honorable Charlie Dent  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Military Construction, 
Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies  
HVC-227, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Military Construction, 
Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Dent and Ranking Member Wasserman Schultz:

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to the health and well-being of our nation’s veterans. Congress has long understood the relationship between robust research into the health care needs of our veterans and improved outcomes in treatment and care. For this reason, we respectfully request that the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2019 fully fund the President’s budget request increases for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical and Prosthetic Research appropriation.

As part of the largest integrated health care system in the United States, the VA is in prime position to study the causes and most effective treatments of the conditions that most commonly afflict our servicemembers and veterans. VA researchers are studying treatments for some of the most devastating mental and physical health issues affecting veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury (TBI), traumatic amputation, sensory dysfunction and loss, polytrauma, and suicide. The VA is assessing the impact of military sexual trauma (MST) on both men and women veterans, researching substance-use disorders, and measuring the impact of the ongoing Program of Comprehensive Assistance for VA Family Caregivers on the health of both veterans and their caregivers. VA’s research also focuses on continuing care across a veteran’s entire life span, studying causes and treatments of various cancers, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), chronic pain, and Gulf War illnesses. The increase requested in the President’s budget includes biomedical research and development inflation, the VA Secretary’s research priorities, the Million Veterans Program, and VA’s new partnership with the Department of Energy.
Let's work together to foster a health care system for our nation's veterans that is as innovative and effective as they are. We urge you to fully fund the President's Budget request for VA Medical and Prosthetic Research.

Thank you for your consideration and for your leadership on behalf of our veterans.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth H. Esty
Member of Congress

Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress

Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress

Mike Coffman
Member of Congress

Mark Takano
Member of Congress

Walter B. Jones
Member of Congress

Julia Brownley
Member of Congress

Jenniffer González-Colón
Member of Congress

Beto O'Rourke
Member of Congress

Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan
Member of Congress

Rosa DeLauro
Member of Congress

Adam Smith
Member of Congress

Sander Levin
Member of Congress
Richard E. Neal  
Member of Congress

Lucille Roybal-Allard  
Member of Congress

Mike Thompson  
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress

Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress

Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress

Sheila Jackson Lee  
Member of Congress

Rick Larsen  
Member of Congress

Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress

Adam B. Schiff  
Member of Congress

Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress

Jim Himes  
Member of Congress

James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress

Lois Frankel  
Member of Congress
Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress

Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

Dave Loebsack
Member of Congress

Keith Ellison
Member of Congress

Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress

Donald M. Payne, Jr
Member of Congress

Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress

Andre Carson
Member of Congress

Judy Chu
Member of Congress

Al Green
Member of Congress

Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress

Salud O. Carbajal
Member of Congress

Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress
Juan Vargas  
Member of Congress

John K. Delaney  
Member of Congress

Ted Deutch  
Member of Congress

Joaquin Castro  
Member of Congress

Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress

Jared Polis  
Member of Congress

Tulsi Gabbard  
Member of Congress

David N. Cicilline  
Member of Congress

Daniel Lipinski  
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David Scott  
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Charlie Crist  
Member of Congress

Anna G. Eshoo  
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Frederica Wilson  
Member of Congress

Albio Sires  
Member of Congress

Jacky Rosen  
Member of Congress

Ami Bera, M.D.  
Member of Congress

Robert C. "Bobby" Scott  
Member of Congress
Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress