



April 14, 2021

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Chairwoman
Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense
H-405, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515-6018

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense
H-405, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515-6018

Dear Chairwoman McCollum and Ranking Member Calvert:

The undersigned childhood cancer organizations are members of the Alliance for Childhood Cancer, consisting of patient advocacy groups, healthcare professionals and scientific organizations, representing millions of Americans who care deeply about childhood cancer. We write in support of an increase to \$130 million for the Department of Defense's Peer Reviewed Cancer Research Program (PRCRP) and the continued inclusion of pediatric, adolescent and young adults (AYA) cancers, pediatric brain tumors, neuroblastoma, sarcomas, germ cell cancers, blood cancers, lymphoma, and thyroid cancer as eligible topics of funding under the program for Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22).

Since 2009, the PRCRP has supported innovative research in cancers designated by Congress as relevant to those in military service and their families. Childhood cancer, the leading disease killer of children, adolescents and young adults in the United States, affects families without prejudice regardless of geographical location, occupation, or income and impacts military readiness of our service men and women.

Childhood and AYA cancers differ in biology and types from older adults and therefore require targeted research. Specifically, it is now known that pediatric brain tumors are the leading cause of cancer death in children ages 0–19. There are several different types of pediatric brain tumors that have survival rates below 10%. Similarly, the age-adjusted death rate for childhood leukemia, the most common form of cancer in children and AYA's younger than 20 years, has declined by over 75% since 1969. However, despite this decline leukemia is still the second leading cause of cancer death among this cohort. Research funding through PRCRP is sorely needed to enhance understanding of these deadly tumors and cancers mentioned above so that treatments can be more effective and less toxic.

We firmly believe that an increase in the FY22 PRCRP budget will result in marked progress in understanding the nature and treatment of childhood cancers. The lives of many children, adolescents and young adults depend on vigorous and innovative research programs like PRCRP to combat these diseases.



Thank you for your consideration of this request. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Sarah Milberg, Co-Chair of the Alliance for Childhood Cancer, at smilberg@allianceforchildhoodcancer.org.

Respectfully,

The Alliance for Childhood Cancer

American Association for Cancer Research
American Childhood Cancer Organization
American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology
Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses
Association of Pediatric Oncology Social Workers
Andrew McDonough B+ Foundation
Children's Brain Tumor Foundation
Children's Cancer Cause
Children's Oncology Group
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
Mattie Miracle Cancer Foundation
National Brain Tumor Society
Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation
Rally Foundation for Childhood Cancer Research
St. Baldrick's Foundation
St. Jude Children's Research Hospital