

The Honorable Peter J. Visclosky
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee, Defense Subcommittee
H-405, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee, Defense Subcommittee
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Visclosky 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 \$120 million for the Peer Reviewed Cancer Research Program and the continued inclusion of pediatric brain tumors and neuroblastoma as eligible topics of funding under the program. In addition, we support the addition of a new line-item under the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program to fund additional research for cancer in children, adolescents and young adults provided the PRCRP remains a key focus.

Since 2009, the Peer Reviewed Cancer Research Program (PRCRP), part of the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program administered by the Department of Defense, has supported innovative research in cancers designated by Congress as relevant to those in military service and their families.

Childhood cancer affects families regardless of geographical location, occupation, or income, and impacts military families without prejudice. Cancer is tragically the leading disease killer of children, adolescents and young adults in the United States. Specifically, it is now known that brain tumors are the leading cause of cancer death in children ages 0–19. Research funding through PRCRP is sorely needed to enhance understanding of these deadly tumors so that treatments can be more effective and less harmful to children.

Children have many different types of brain tumors, which are difficult to treat successfully due to their complex origin and the vulnerability of a child's developing brain. These children incur very substantial medical costs for multidisciplinary care both to treat their disease and to provide follow up care for survivors. The PRCRP program is an investment in the future of these children and will directly assist military families with children facing this diagnosis.

We were greatly encouraged that funding for the PRCRP in Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19) was increased to \$90 million, and again included pediatric brain tumors, brain cancer, neuroblastoma, and cancer in children, adolescents, and young adults as an eligible funding topic. Because of this increase in funding and inclusion of these subject areas, critical research will continue to be funded for children with life-threatening cancers.

We encourage Congress to once again extend PRCRP eligibility in FY20 to pediatric brain tumors, brain cancer and neuroblastoma, as well as increase funding for the program to \$120 million. In addition, provided that funding and the aforementioned topics are maintained within the PRCRP, we also support the creation of a new program under the CDMRP for \$30 million to fund research related to cancer in children, adolescents, and young adults.

We firmly believe that an increase in the FY20 PRCRP budget will result in marked progress in understanding the nature and treatment of childhood cancers. The lives of many children 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 Danielle Leach, Co-Chair of the Alliance for Childhood Cancer, at leach@alliance4childhoodcancer.org.

Respectfully,

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

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee, Defense Subcommittee
S-146A, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Shelby and Ranking Member Durbin:

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