

June 1, 2016

The Honorable John McCain  
United States Senator  
Chair  
Senate Committee on Armed Services  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed  
United States Senator  
Ranking Minority Member  
Senate Committee on Armed Services  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman McCain and Ranking Member Reed,

The undersigned organizations and institutions write in opposition to Sections 756 and 898 of S. 2943, the fiscal year 2017 National Defense Authorization Act, which would prohibit funding for medical research at the Department of Defense (DoD) unless such research meets certain narrowly defined criteria related to military relevance. We urge you to support amendments that we expect to be offered during Senate floor consideration that would strike this language from the bill.

We oppose Section 756 because it is unnecessary and, if enacted, could jeopardize funding for research activities that have broader relevance to the U.S. military, including the health and well-being of military families and veterans, and the efficiency of the military health care system. We oppose Section 898 because it would place unnecessary and burdensome acquisition compliance and auditing requirements on programs that are already serving the taxpayer well.

The medical research programs at DoD directly impact the health and lives of the U.S. military, including combat veterans and their families. They include important medical research programs related to several forms of cancer and other disorders. Grants awarded through these programs have led to breakthroughs on nerve regeneration and traumatic brain injury (TBI) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) – key developments favorably impacting our newest wounded warriors. Other programs provide groundbreaking research on psychological health, Gulf War Illness, spinal cord injury, and hearing and vision loss (which comprise a significant portion of current battlefield injuries). Many of these diseases occur at greater rates in those who have served in the military.

Defense health research grants undergo rigorous merit review from both scientific and consumer review panels, and are awarded competitively based in large part on their innovative qualities as well as scientific merit and relevance to the U.S. military.

During floor consideration of S. 2943, we urge the Senate to support amendments to strike this language from the bill and also support continued investments in the medical research programs at DoD.

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Sincerely,

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics  
Action to Cure Kidney Cancer  
Adult Congenital Heart Association  
Alliance for Lupus Research/Lupus Research Institute  
ALS Association  
Alzheimer's Association  
American Academy of Dermatology Association  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Association for Cancer Research  
American Association for Dental Research  
American Association of Clinical Urologists  
American Brain Tumor Association  
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network  
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
American Dental Association  
American Diabetes Association  
American Gastroenterological Association  
American Heart Association  
American Lung Association  
American Psychological Association  
American Society of Nephrology  
American Thoracic Society  
American Urological Association  
Aplastic Anemia and MDS International Foundation  
Arthritis Foundation  
Association of American Cancer Institutes  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Association of American Universities  
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities  
Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization  
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America  
Autism Speaks  
Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network  
Cancer Support Community  
Caring Together New York  
Children's Heart Foundation  
Children's Tumor Foundation  
Citizens United for Research in Epilepsy (CURE)  
Coalition for National Security Research (CNSR)  
Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory

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Colon Cancer Alliance  
Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America  
CureHHT  
Debbie's Dream Foundation: Curing Stomach Cancer  
Digestive Disease National Coalition  
Duke University  
Duke University School of Medicine  
Dystonia Medical Research Foundation  
Endocrine Society  
Esophageal Cancer Action Network, Inc.  
Fight Colorectal Cancer  
FORCE: Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered  
Foundation for Women's Cancer  
Foundation to Eradicate Duchenne  
Georgetown University  
GBS|CIDP Foundation International  
Hartford HealthCare Center  
Hepatitis Foundation International  
Hydrocephalus Association  
Indiana University  
International Foundation for Functional GI Disorders  
International Myeloma Foundation  
Interstitial Cystitis Association  
Johns Hopkins University  
Kidney Cancer Association  
LAM Foundation  
Lineberger Clinic Cancer Center at the University of North Carolina  
Littlest Tumor Foundation  
Living Beyond Breast Cancer  
Lung Cancer Alliance  
Lupus Foundation of America  
Lymphangiomatosis & Gorham's Disease Alliance  
Lymphoma Research Foundation  
Malecare Cancer Support  
Melanoma Research Foundation  
The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research  
Michigan State University  
Minnesota Ovarian Cancer Alliance  
Muscular Dystrophy Association  
National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research  
National Association of Nurse Practitioners In Women's Health  
National Autism Association

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National Fragile X Foundation  
National Gulf War Resource Center  
National Kidney Foundation  
National Multiple Sclerosis Society  
National Ovarian Cancer Coalition  
NephCure Kidney International  
Neurofibromatosis Arizona  
Neurofibromatosis Central Plains  
Neurofibromatosis Michigan  
Neurofibromatosis (NF) Midwest  
Neurofibromatosis Network  
Neurofibromatosis Northeast  
Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health  
The Ohio State University  
Oncology Nursing Society  
Ovarian Cancer Research Fund Alliance  
Pancreatic Cancer Action Network  
Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy (PPMD)  
Pediatric Congenital Heart Association  
Penn State University  
Prostate Cancer Foundation  
Prostate Health Education Network  
Pulmonary Hypertension Association  
Research!America  
Rettsyndrome.org  
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey  
Scleroderma Foundation  
Sleep Research Society  
Society of Gynecologic Oncology  
St. Baldrick's Foundation  
State University of New York  
Susan G. Komen  
Texas Neurofibromatosis Foundation  
Theresa's Research Foundation  
Tuberous Sclerosis Alliance  
University of Arizona Cancer Center at Dignity Health St. Joseph's  
Hospital and Medical Center  
University of California-Irvine  
University of California System  
University of Central Florida  
University of Kansas  
University of Kansas Medical Center

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University of Pittsburgh  
University of Washington  
University of Wisconsin-Madison  
US Hereditary Angioedema Association  
Us TOO International Prostate Cancer Education and Support Network  
The V Foundation for Cancer Research  
Vanderbilt University  
Veterans for Common Sense  
Veterans Health Council  
Vietnam Veterans of America  
Washington State Neurofibromatosis Families  
Weill Cornell Medicine  
WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease  
Young Survival Coalition  
ZERO-The End of Prostate Cancer

cc: United States Senators

Contact: Mark Vieth, Coordinator, Defense Health Research Consortium, (202) 484-1100,  
[mvieth@dc-crd.com](mailto:mvieth@dc-crd.com)