

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 19, 2026

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Defense
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Defense
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Calvert and Ranking Member McCollum:

Since 2009, the Peer Reviewed Cancer Research Program (PRCRP), within the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP) at the Department of Defense (DOD), has supported high-impact, innovative research in cancers specifically designated by Congress as relevant to service members, veterans, and their families. As the Subcommittee on Defense develops the Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) Defense Appropriations bill, we respectfully request that PRCRP funding be provided at \$180 million and that brain cancer – including glioblastoma – and pediatric brain tumors remain eligible categories within the program.

Brain cancer and pediatric brain tumors continue to impose a devastating toll on military and civilian families alike. In 2026, more than 90,000 individuals in the United States will be diagnosed with a primary brain tumor, including nearly 5,000 children under the age of 19. Malignant brain tumors remain the leading cause of cancer-related death in children and are among the most common cancers affecting adolescents and young adults ages 15 to 39. Despite decades of research, treatment options remain limited and survival rates for the most aggressive forms of brain cancer remain unacceptably low. Sustained investment through PRCRP is essential to accelerating progress toward more effective therapies and improved survival.

Growing evidence suggests that military service may be associated with elevated risks of brain tumors. A 2023 study published in *Neuro-Oncology* found that veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan experience a 26 percent higher rate of brain cancer compared to the general population. Service members are also more likely to develop brain tumors at a younger age, often between 30 and 39 years old, compared to the average age of onset of 64 in the broader population. Earlier PRCRP reporting to Congress has explored potential associations between military service and exposure to ionizing radiation, and other studies have identified increased tumor incidence among children of Air Force personnel. These findings reinforce the need for continued, defense-focused research to better understand service-related risks and protect force readiness.

PRCRP plays a unique and complementary role in the federal research portfolio by funding high-risk, high-reward science that may not otherwise receive support through traditional mechanisms. The program has advanced understanding of tumor biology, identified novel therapeutic targets, and helped lay the groundwork for clinical breakthroughs. Providing \$180 million in FY27 while preserving eligibility for brain cancer, glioblastoma, and pediatric brain tumors will help sustain promising research pipelines, support additional meritorious proposals, and ensure continued progress against cancers that affect those who serve.

As Congress confronts challenging budgetary decisions in FY27, maintaining robust support for PRCRP represents a strategic investment in force health protection, military family well-being, and national readiness.

We appreciate your consideration of this request and your continued commitment to the health of our service members, veterans, and their families.

Sincerely,



Michael T. McCaul
Member of Congress



Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress



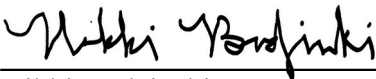
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Dan Goldman
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Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress



Nikki Budzinski
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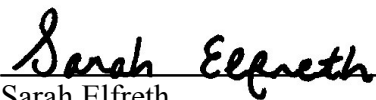
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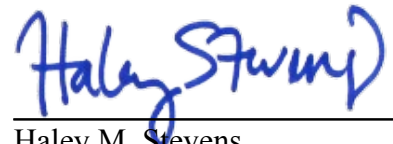
Kim Schrier, M.D.
Member of Congress



Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



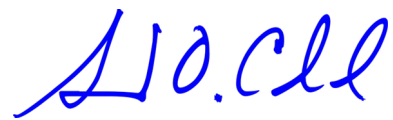
Sarah Elfreth
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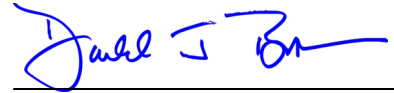
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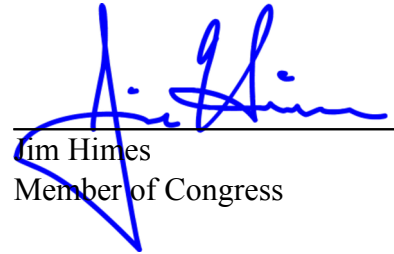
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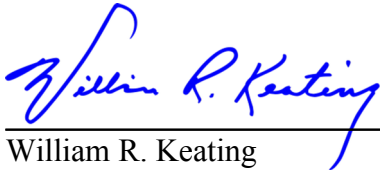
Don Bacon
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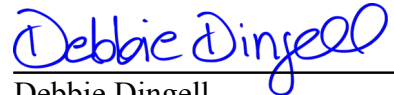
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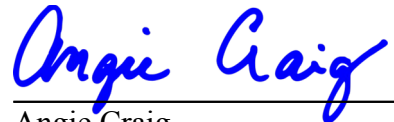
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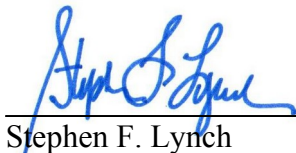
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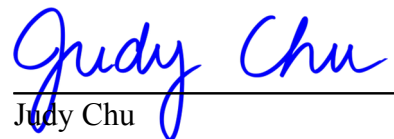
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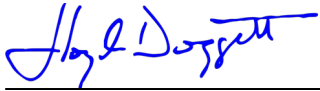
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Rashida Tlaib
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Josh Riley
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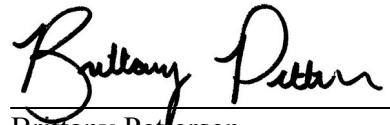
Darren Soto
Member of Congress



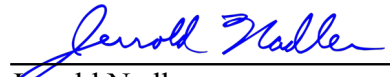
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Jerrold Nadler
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Kevin Mullin
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