



May 21, 2020

The Honorable John Boozman  
Chair  
Subcommittee on Military Construction,  
Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Brian Schatz  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Military Construction,  
Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Chair  
Subcommittee on Military Construction,  
Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Military Construction,  
Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Chairman Boozman, Chairwoman Wasserman Schultz, and Ranking Members Schatz and Granger:

The Friends of VA Medical Care and Health Research (FOVA) thanks you for your support of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical and Prosthetic Research Program and your recent efforts to support the nation during the COVID-19 pandemic. As your subcommittees work to consider additional opportunities to support veterans through future COVID-19 emergency supplemental legislation, we urge at least \$50 million in supplemental funding for VA research to support COVID-19 research efforts and sustain the momentum of the entire VA research enterprise.

FOVA was founded over 30 years ago to ensure that America's veterans receive high-quality health care supported by veteran-centric research. Today, FOVA is a diverse coalition representing nearly 100 national academic, medical, and scientific societies; health and patient advocacy groups; and veteran-focused associations.

FOVA is appreciative of Congress's recent investments to support veteran-centric research. While the fiscal year (FY) 2020 enacted level would have continued this investment and covered the cost of biomedical inflation, the FY 2020 appropriations bill also included \$50 million in rescissions from the Medical and Prosthetic Research Program. This rescission not only impedes VA research in all priority areas, including veteran suicide prevention, chronic pain, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), but is also especially detrimental coming just months before the nation began its fight against the relentless coronavirus pandemic. In FY 2021, the nearly 100 undersigned organizations support a funding recommendation of \$860 million for VA research, to restore the investment in veteran-centric research to a trajectory of meaningful growth above inflation and renewed investment in groundbreaking medical research.

To address immediate and unexpected COVID-19-related impacts, we recommend at least an additional \$50 million for the VA research program through future COVID-19 supplemental funding bills to support new VA research projects and clinical trials designed specifically to address the effects of COVID-19 on the veteran population. With nearly 13,000 documented COVID-19 cases to date, it is critical that the VA

research program is equipped to support front line research efforts to protect a veteran population that is disproportionately older and suffers from preexisting conditions.

With the pandemic continuing to progress, we urge appropriators to provide at least an additional \$50 million in supplemental funding to directly support VA's COVID-19 response efforts and maintain a robust budget trajectory for VA research in FY 2021 to support continued momentum of all research efforts. We look forward to working with you towards this goal.

Sincerely,

**FOVA FY 2021 Recommendation Endorsing Organizations (96)**

Academic Consortium for Integrative Medicine & Health  
AcademyHealth  
Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine  
American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry  
American Academy of Neurology  
American Academy of Ophthalmology  
American Academy of Pain Medicine  
American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation  
American Association for Anatomy  
American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine  
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy  
American Association of Directors of Psychiatric Residency Training  
American Association of Neuromuscular & Electromyography Medicine  
American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases  
American Brain Coalition  
American College of Academic Addiction Medicine  
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
American College of Physicians  
American College of Radiology  
American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine  
American Dental Education Association  
American Gastroenterological Association  
American Geriatrics Society  
American Heart Association  
American Liver Foundation  
American Massage Therapy Association  
American Organization for Nursing Leadership  
American Orthopaedic Association  
American Osteopathic Association  
American Physical Therapy Association  
American Physiological Society  
American Psychiatric Association  
American Psychological Association  
American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics  
American Society of Nephrology  
American Spinal Injury Association  
American Surgical Association

American Thoracic Society  
American Tinnitus Association  
American Urological Association  
AMVETS (American Veterans)  
Arthritis Foundation  
Associated Medical Schools of New York  
Association for Clinical and Translational Science  
Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology  
Association of Academic Physiatrists  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Association of Bioethics Program Directors  
Association of Chairs of Departments of Physiology  
Association of Medical and Graduate Departments of Biochemistry  
Association of Minority Health Professions Schools  
Association of Pathology Chairs  
Association of Psychologists in Academic Health Centers  
Association of University Professors of Neurology  
Association of VA Hematology/Oncology  
Association of VA Psychologist Leaders  
Association of University Anesthesiologists  
Association of Veterans Affairs Nurse Anesthetists  
Blinded Veterans Association  
Catholic War Veterans  
Clinical Research Forum  
Coalition for Clinical and Translational Science  
Digestive Disease National Coalition  
Disabled American Veterans  
Dystonia Advocacy Network  
Dystonia Medical Research Foundation  
Endocrine Society  
Epilepsy Foundation  
Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology  
GBS|CIDP Foundation International  
International Foundation for Gastrointestinal Disorders  
Interstitial Cystitis Association  
LUNGeivity Foundation  
Lymphatic Education Research Network  
National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research  
National Alliance on Mental Illness  
National Association for Biomedical Research  
National Association for the Advancement of Orthotics and Prosthetics  
National Association of Veterans' Research and Education Foundations  
NephCure Kidney International  
New York State Academic Dental Centers  
Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs  
Paralyzed Veterans of America  
Polish Legion of American Veterans  
Restless Legs Syndrome Foundation

Scleroderma Foundation  
Sleep Research Society  
Society for Neuroscience  
Society of Academic Associations of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine  
Society of General Internal Medicine  
The Marfan Foundation  
Veterans Health Council of Vietnam Veterans of America  
Veterans of Foreign Wars  
VeteransAgainstAlzheimer's  
Vietnam Veterans of America