November 18, 2025

The Honorable Mike Johnson Speaker of the House Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries Minority Leader U.S. House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515 The Honorable John Thune Majority Leader, U.S. Senate Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer Minority Leader U.S. Senate Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Johnson, Majority Leader Thune, Minority Leader Jeffries, and Minority Leader Schumer:

We, the undersigned organizations, urge you to work toward the enactment of the fiscal year (FY) 2026 Defense Appropriations Act, to ensure full funding levels for the Defense Health Research Programs, including the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP). We collectively represent millions of American veterans, military retirees, military families, and civilians who benefit from the ongoing research funded by the CDMRP.

Our organizations appreciate actions by the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations to advance their respective versions of the FY2026 Defense Appropriations Act. However, critical time for negotiating a final bill has been lost due to gridlock and the recent federal government shutdown. We are particularly concerned about the possibility of Congress enacting another year-long continuing resolution (CR) in lieu of a final Defense Appropriations bill. The FY2025 Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, enacted last March, led to devastating consequences, resulting in a 57 percent cut to CDMRP programs below FY2024-enacted funding levels. As a result, 23 of the 35 CDMRP programs received no funding in FY2025.¹ Another long-term CR would risk repeating or even worsening these cuts, undermining the vital research that directly benefits the health of the men and women who serve in the U.S. Armed Services.

Failure to enact the Defense Appropriations Act this year will have serious health consequences for millions of Americans — especially current and former military service members and their families — who live with chronic and debilitating disorders. Further delay will impede critical new discoveries and slow the translation of promising medical innovations into new treatments and cures that could greatly improve or even save lives.

¹ Programs that received no funding in FY25: Alcohol and Substance Abuse Disorder, Arthritis, Autism, Bone Marrow Failure Disease, Combat Readiness Medical, Epilepsy, Hearing Restoration, Glioblastoma, Joint Warfighter Medical, Kidney Cancer, Lung Cancer, Lupus, Multiple Sclerosis, Neurofibromatosis, Orthopaedic, Pancreatic Cancer, Parkinson's Disease, Reconstructive Transplant, Spinal Cord Injury, Tick-Borne Disease, TBI and Psychological Health, Tuberous Sclerosis Complex, Vision.

Protecting Critical CDMRP Funding: A Call to Congress November 18, 2025 Page 2

Each year, CDMRP engages in a rigorous process of strategic vision setting, proposal solicitations, and a two-step peer and programmatic review of applications to identify and fund the most promising research proposals. The CDMRP annually receives more than 12,000 pre-applications and 7,000 full applications for grants, which undergo both a peer and programmatic review to ensure that only the highest-quality, most innovative projects are selected for funding. Further delays in enacting the FY2026 Defense Appropriations Act will severely disrupt this process. Such delays will adversely impact the Department of Defense's ability to conduct thorough peer-reviewed scientific reviews of grant applications and timely negotiations to award FY2026 grants.

Failure to pass a fully funded fiscal year 2026 budget will also compromise the ability of research institutions and laboratories nationwide across the U.S to effectively plan, prepare and execute the highest quality grant applications. This uncertainty threatens to stall discovery-based research, destabilize critical scientific workforces, and weaken the nation's position as a global leader in biomedical innovation.

The CDMRP is a cornerstone of the Defense Appropriations Act, and failure to enact this legislation will have a devastating impact on these programs. Aside from the obvious biomedical and economic consequences of such actions, failure to enact legislation will interrupt important pipelines that have allowed investigators at U.S. medical research institutions to maintain our leadership as the best in the world as well as build careers and implement new and innovative medical research. Inaction risks halting the development of new therapies that improve outcomes, reduce long-term health costs, and save lives. It will also disrupt vital research pipelines that enable U.S. investigators to pursue bold, innovative ideas and build lasting scientific careers.

We therefore urge Congress to act swiftly and work together in a bipartisan, bicameral spirit to enact the FY2026 Defense Appropriations Act, ensuring that this essential research continues to advance the health and readiness of all Americans.

Sincerely,

ALS Association
ALS Network
ALS United
ALS United Connecticut
ALS United Greater New York
ALS United North Carolina
ALS United Ohio
ALS United Rocky Mountain

Alternating Hemiplegia of Childhood Foundation

American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology

American Academy of Ophthalmology

American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons

American Brain Tumor Association

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

American College of Rheumatology

American Gastroenterological Association

American Lung Association

American Orthotic and Prosthetic Association

American Psychological Association Services

American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy

American Society of Hematology

American Society of Ophthalmic Trauma

American Urological Association (AUA)

Amputee Coalition

Angelman Syndrome Foundation

Aplastic Anemia and MDS International Foundation

Arthritis Foundation

Association for Clinical Oncology (ASCO)

Association of American Cancer Institutes

Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America

Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network (BCAN)

Blood Cancer United (Formerly The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society)

Cancer ABCs

Cancer Support Community

Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine

Celiac Disease Foundation

CFC International

Children's Tumor Foundation

Cholangiocarcinoma Foundation

Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation

Coalition for National Trauma Research

Coalition to Cure CHD2

Colorectal Cancer Alliance

COMBINEDBrain

Connect Melanoma

Craig H. Neilsen Foundation

Cri du Chat Research Foundation

Crohn's & Colitis Foundation

CURE Epilepsy

Cure HHT

Cure SMA

Danny Did Epilepsy Foundation

Deadliest Cancers Coalition

Debbie's Dream Foundation: Curing Stomach Cancer

Decoding Developmental Epilepsies

Defense Health Research Consortium

Dravet Syndrome Foundation

DYNC1H1 Association

Epilepsies Action Network (EAN)

Epilepsy Alliance America

Epilepsy Foundation of America

Esophageal Cancer Action Network (ECAN)

FDMAS Alliance

Fight Colorectal Cancer

Foundation for Angelman Syndrome Therapeutics

Foundation to Eradicate Duchenne

Friedreich's Ataxia Research Foundation (FARA)

GABA-A Alliance

Giving Tree Club of Rossmoor

Global Healthy Living Foundation

GNB1 Advocacy Group

GO2 for Lung Cancer

Hearing Loss Association of America

HIV Medicine Association

Hope for HIE

Hope for Stomach Cancer

Hydrocephalus Association

Ian Burkhart Foundation

Indiana University

Infectious Diseases Society of America

International Myeloma Foundation

Interstitial Cystitis Association

Johns Hopkins University & Medicine

KCNQ2 Cure Alliance

Kidney Cancer Association

KidneyCAN

Littlest Tumor Foundation

LUNGevity Foundation

Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc.

Lupus Foundation of America

Lupus Research Alliance

Lymphatic Education & Research Network

Lymphoma Research Foundation

Malecare Cancer Support

Massachusetts ME/CFS & FM Association

Melanoma Research Foundation

METAvivor

Military Order of the Purple Heart

Monica Weldon Consulting, LLC

National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research

National Alliance of State Prostate Cancer Coalitions

National Ataxia Foundation

National Autism Association

National Brain Tumor Society

National Health Council

National Kidney Foundation

National Multiple Sclerosis Society

Neurofibromatosis (NF) Midwest

Neurofibromatosis Network

NORSE Institute

North American Spinal Cord Injury Consortium

Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance

Pancreatic Cancer Action Network (PanCAN)

Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy

Patient-Led Research Collaborative

Phelan-McDermid Syndrome Foundation

PKD Foundation

PPP3CA Hope Foundation

Prostate Cancer Foundation

Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation

Rally Foundation for Childhood Cancer Research

Rare Epilepsy Network (REN)

RASopathies Network

Research!America

Shepherd Center

SHEPHERD Foundation

Society of Military Ophthalmologists

Solve M.E.

South Carolina Advocates for Epilepsy

St. Baldrick's Foundation

Susan G. Komen

TB Alliance

Texas Neurofibromatosis Foundation

The Cute Syndrome Foundation

The Foundation for Peripheral Neuropathy

The LAM Foundation

The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research

The Prostate Cancer Clinical Trials Consortium

The Sergeant Sullivan Circle

The Society of Thoracic Surgeons

The Sturge-Weber Foundation

TSC Alliance

Unite 2 Fight Paralysis

United Spinal Association
University of Cincinnati
University of Iowa
University of Rochester
Veteran Warriors
Veterans for Common Sense
VHL Alliance
Washington State University
Weill Cornell Medicine
Wings for Life USA - Spinal Cord Research Foundation Inc.
ZERO Prostate Cancer

cc: House and Senate Committees on Appropriations