

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 13, 2018

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense
United States Senate
122 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
Vice Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense
United States Senate
122 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Shelby and Vice Chairman Durbin:

As you consider the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 Department of Defense appropriations bill, we respectfully request that you maintain research funding for eating disorders under the Peer Reviewed Medical Research Program (PRMRP). We appreciate your commitment to military eating disorder research under the PRMRP in the FY 2017 and FY 2018 Department of Defense appropriations bills and urge you to continue this support.

Thirty million Americans experience a clinically significant eating disorder at some point in their lives. Eating disorders affect all people regardless of gender, age, body size, race, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status. The mortality rate of eating disorders is the highest of any psychiatric illness.

Studies show a higher prevalence of eating disorders among service members and their families when compared to the civilian population.^[1] A *Military Medicine* study of over 1,000 female veterans showed more than 16 percent reported having an eating disorder. This study also showed significant relationships between eating disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and sexual trauma.^[2] An *American Journal of Epidemiology* study also found that deployed service members were almost two times as likely to report the onset of eating disorders when exposed to combat compared to members who were deployed with no exposure to combat.^[3]

In FY 2017, the PRMRP initially identified an overwhelming number of research applications on military and military family eating disorders, demonstrating the significant need to continue efforts to provide research funding for this issue. We believe that maintaining the eligibility of eating disorders under the PRMRP in FY 2019 is important to advancing research that would improve care for our service members and their families.

[1] Waasdorp, C. E., Caboot, J. B., Robinson, C. A., Abraham, A. A., & Adelman, W. P. (2007). Screening military dependent adolescent females for disordered eating. *Military Medicine*, 172(9), 962-967; Bartlett, B. (2015). Eating disorders in military and veteran men and women: A systematic review. *The International Journal of Eating Disorders*, 48(8), 1057 - 1069.

[2] Forman-Hoffman, V. L., Mengeling, M., Booth, B. M., Torner, J., & Sadler, A. G. (2012). Eating disorders, post-traumatic stress, and sexual trauma in women veterans. *Military Medicine*, 177(10), 1161-1168.

[3] Jacobson, I. G., Smith, T. C., Smith, B., Keel, P. K., Amoroso, P. J., Wells, T. S., Bathalon, G. P., Boyko, E. J. & Ryan, M. A. K. (2009). Disordered eating and weight changes after deployment: longitudinal assessment of a large US military Cohort. *American Journal of Epidemiology*, 169(4), 415-427.

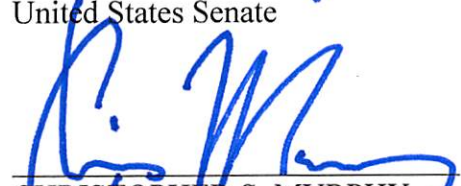
Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,


AMY KLOBUCHAR
United States Senate


M. MICHAEL ROUNDS
United States Senate

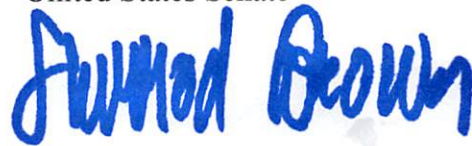

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