

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 18, 2008

The Honorable John Murtha
Chairman
Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Defense
H-149 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable C.W. Bill Young
Ranking Member
Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Defense
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Murtha and Ranking Member Young:

We appreciate your past support of biomedical research critical to people suffering from Parkinson's diseases that is being conducted by the Department of Defense's Neurotoxin Exposure Treatment Research Parkinson's (NETRP) program. We respectfully request \$55 million in funding for the NETRP program in the U.S. Army Military Operational Medicine Research Program under the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command for Fiscal Year 2009.

As you are aware, American troops are routinely exposed to a wide range of chemicals, low-level radiation, and other external stressors and toxins such as head injury. Scientists believe these exposures increase the risk of developing neurodegenerative conditions, particularly Parkinson's disease. These conditions negatively impact the readiness of American military forces since they all result in the permanent loss of brain and nerve cells.

At a time when additional pressure is placed on the warfighter, the NETRP program was established more than a decade ago to discover the causes of as well as prevention, better treatments, and cures for Parkinson's disease. Understanding how exposures occur, the incidence of disease afterwards, and how these conditions may be effectively treated, cured, or prevented will allow the Department of Defense (DoD) to better protect military personnel and minimize the risk of future exposures. The scientific findings from biomedical research conducted through NETRP may provide DoD with innovations in materiel design, avoidance protocols for unnecessary harmful exposures, and neuroprotective drugs to prevent damage in the first place, which will considerably improve military readiness. Furthermore, the early detection of nerve cell loss caused by such toxic exposures may provide DoD with better methods of evaluating warfighter performance and faster ways of detecting potential impairments, which also contribute to greater military preparedness.

However, the military is not the only recipient of the benefits of the NETRP, as any research breakthroughs in prevention, detection, and treatment of neurodegenerative conditions may be immediately applied to civilians—particularly the more than one million Americans with Parkinson's disease and the 60,000 people diagnosed each year.

We are aware of the budget restraints facing the Subcommittee, but we urge you to fully fund this national peer-reviewed granting program for which all grants must have a direct warfighter connection. This program is unique in that it is the only Parkinson's specific federal research granting program and it is unique in that all grants must have a connection to our service men and women. As such, the NETRP program is truly a Department of Defense research program.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to provide the DoD, peer-reviewed NETRP with \$55 million in funding for Fiscal Year 2009. This level of funding is necessary to prevent cuts to critical NETRP funded research projects. This is not an expansion of the program; rather, it is the funding NETRP needs to fulfill their mission by funding critical research.

Thank you again for your support. Please contact Kristina Spiegel (Maloney) at 202-225-7944 or Kerry Ann Watkins (King) at 202-225-7896 for any further information regarding this request.


CAROLYN B. MALONEY
Member of Congress

Sincerely,


PETER KING
Member of Congress



MARK UDALL
Member of Congress



FRED UPTON
Member of Congress



LOIS CAPPS
Member of Congress



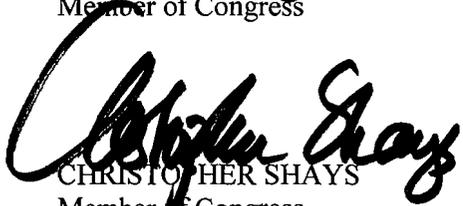
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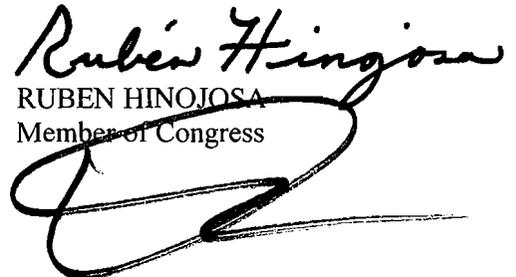
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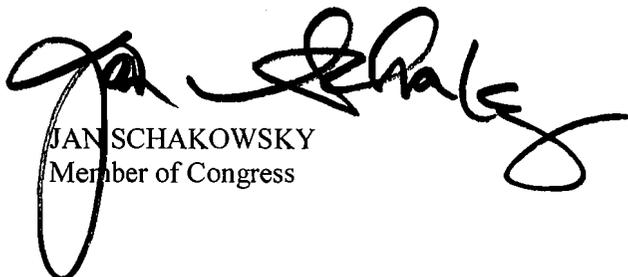
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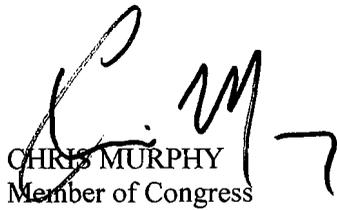
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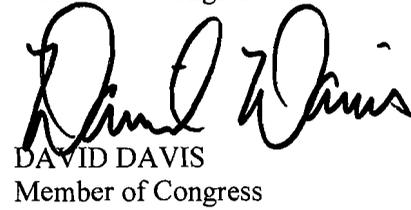
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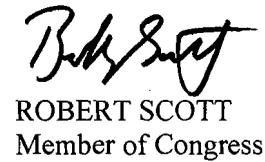

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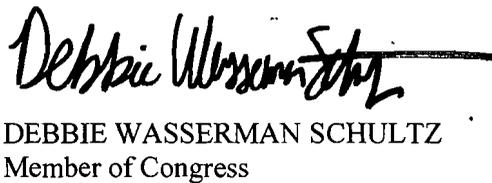

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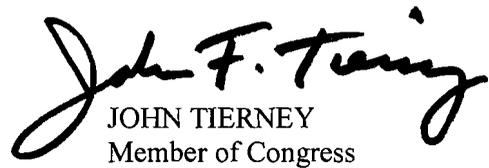

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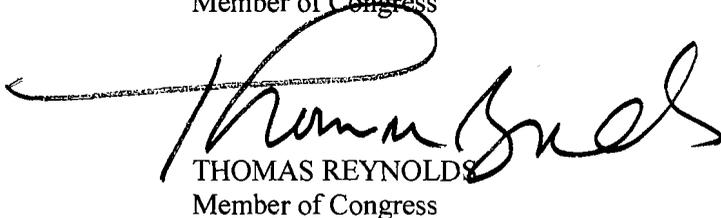

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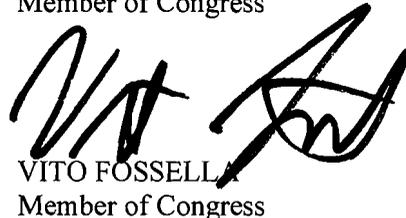

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