

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 19, 2008

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

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

Dear Chairman Murtha and Ranking Member Young:

The undersigned members of the Congressional Brain Injury Task Force, and other concerned Members, respectfully request that \$45 million be appropriated for the Department of Defense Center of Excellence in Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury for Fiscal Year 2009 under Health Affairs, Operation and Maintenance. Of that amount, \$28 million is requested to support the work of the Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center (DVBIC) as it is incorporated into the new Center of Excellence.

As you know, traumatic brain injury (TBI) continues to be the signature wound of the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. TBI is a complex condition that requires a full spectrum of specialized care. As a result of greater funding for and attention to TBI, more efforts are being directed to better assess, diagnose and treat the many variations of TBI. While the Center of Excellence gets underway by early 2009, we do not want to lose the momentum achieved to date by the DVBIC. Since 1992, the DVBIC has coordinated care for our troops from the battlefield to the community, and has researched TBI and improved the state of the art medical treatment. The network of DVBIC sites has treated over 5,200 military personnel with TBI from the War on Terrorism.

The \$28 million would allow the work of the DVBIC to continue, focusing on improving assessment and diagnosis (not confusing TBI with PTSD which has similar symptoms); state of the art rehabilitation; effective community re-entry assistance; support and education; and pilot projects to awaken the severely injured currently in minimally conscious state which may include coma, the vegetative state or locked-in syndrome.

We must assure that our men and women serving in uniform do not fall through the cracks after sustaining TBIs, and are given every possible opportunity for the best medical care, rehabilitation and community reentry assistance that we as a nation can provide.

Thank you for your consideration of this request to help serve our troops.

Sincerely,

Bill Pasculli Jr.

Todd R Platts

Robert J. Kamej

Jim McEwen

Stephanie Ruth Sandlin

Joe Sestek

Chuff Shyne

Tom Allen

Don Young

Donald M. Payne

Corinne Brown

Sheila Jackson Lee

John Longenecker

Phil Hove

Jean Altman

Betty Sutton

Jean McHenry

Dennis J. Kimmel

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