

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

November 10, 2005

The Honorable C.W. Bill Young  
Chairman  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense  
H-309 U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John P. Murtha  
Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Young and Ranking Member Murtha:

As the conferees begin to work on the fiscal year 2006 Appropriations bill for the Subcommittee on Defense, we respectfully seek your support for retaining the House funding level of \$10 million for Gulf War Veterans Illnesses research.

The Congressionally chartered Veterans' Administration Research Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses found in September 2004 that fourteen years after the 1990-1991 Gulf War, between 26 and 32 percent of those who served in that war continue to suffer from serious and persistent health problems—typically multiple symptoms that include severe headaches, memory problems, muscle and joint pain, severe gastrointestinal problems, respiratory problems, skin disorders and other problems. They also determined that the existence of these serious and often debilitating problems could not be scientifically explained by stress or psychiatric illness.

We are only now starting to see the long-term effects. For example, ALS, or Lou Gehrig's disease, occurs in Persian Gulf veterans with twice the frequency of peer veterans that were not deployed. Yet a federal research program to better understand these issues that was once \$45 million strong has been virtually eliminated. The FY 06 budget dedicates no funding to either the Department of Defense or the Department of Health and Human Services for Gulf War Illnesses research. The funding we are requesting is consistent with the VA Research Committee recommendations.

The amendment to the FY 06 House Defense appropriations bill that added the research funding was well supported. It passed by voice vote, had bipartisan support and was backed by the American Legion, Paralyzed Veterans of America, the National Gulf War Resource Center, Vietnam Veterans of America, and Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Finally, research guidance was developed in consultation with top members of the VA Research Committee. We therefore request that the guidance, which is the same as that inserted into the congressional record during bill debate, be included in the conference report. The guidance text

is attached for your reference. We expect this research to supplement the other promising research performed at Army Research, Development, Test and Evaluation within the Department of Defense.

Thank you for consideration of our requests.

Sincerely,



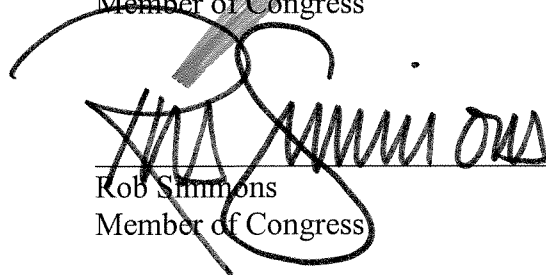
Dennis J. Kucinich  
Member of Congress



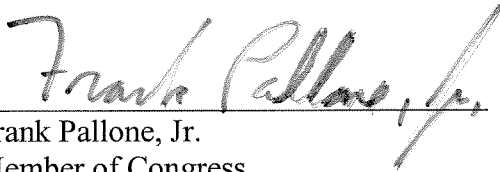
Christopher Shays  
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Bernard Sanders  
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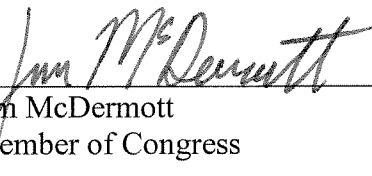
Rob Simmons  
Member of Congress



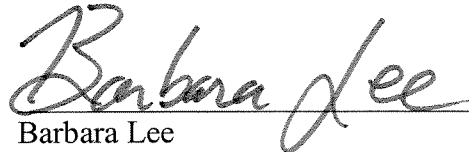
Frank Pallone, Jr.  
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Rush D. Holt  
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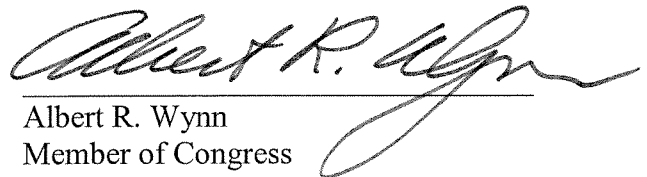
Jim McDermott  
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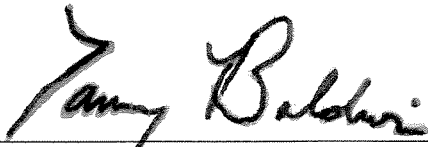
Barbara Lee  
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Lane Evans  
Member of Congress




Albert R. Wynn  
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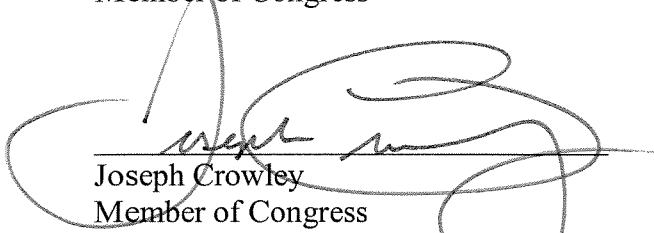
Tammy Baldwin  
Member of Congress

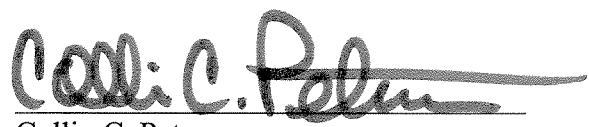


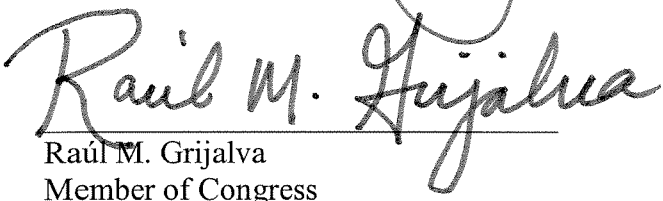
Carolyn B. Maloney  
Member of Congress

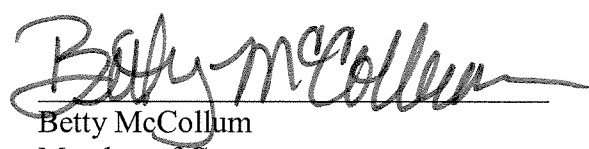
  
Lloyd Doggett  
Member of Congress

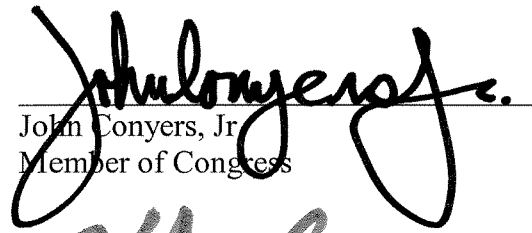
  
Dennis Moore  
Member of Congress


  
Joseph Crowley  
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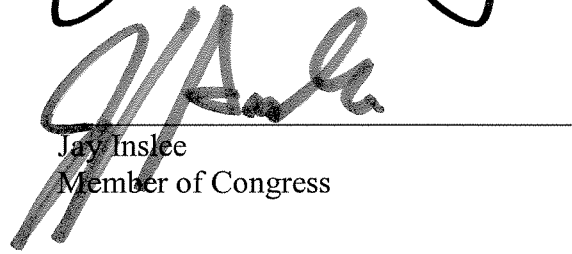
  
Collin C. Peterson  
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Raúl M. Grijalva  
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Betty McCollum  
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John Conyers, Jr.  
Member of Congress

  
Ed Case  
Member of Congress

  
Jay Inslee  
Member of Congress

## **Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses Research Guidance for the FY06 Defense Department Appropriations Conference Report**

“It is intended that the appropriation for research on chronic illnesses affecting veterans of the 1991 Gulf War be used for a coherent research program focusing on 1) identification of mechanisms underlying Gulf War illnesses, 2) chronic effects of neurotoxic substances to which veterans were exposed during deployment; 3) studies that expand on earlier research identifying neurological and immunological abnormalities in ill Gulf War veterans; and 4) identification of promising treatments. The primary objective of the research program will be to elucidate pathophysiological mechanisms underlying Gulf War illnesses, which may subsequently be targeted to developing treatments for these conditions. A further objective will be to identify and evaluate treatments which currently exist and which hold promise for treating these illnesses.

The U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command shall, in consultation with experienced research scientists in relevant fields, establish a list of research questions to address the above topics, and design a program of specific research studies that together constitute a coherent plan to answer these questions, each identified study to be conducted by the most qualified researcher, which may include consulted scientists. As part of this process, there shall be a public solicitation of research proposals (which may include concept exploration and pilot projects) on these questions and at least twenty-five percent of the program (measured by amount funded) shall be made up of proposals selected from this solicitation, as modified if necessary to increase the value of the proposed research to the overall program. At least twenty percent of the program (measured by amount funded) shall address the objective of identifying and evaluating promising existing treatments, such as observation and pilot studies. The program shall be submitted for determination of scientific merit through independent peer review.”