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May 19, 2016

The Honorable Ron Wyden

U.S. Senate

221 Dirksen Senate Office Building

Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Wyden and Representative Johnson:

On behalf of the National Hispanic Medical Association (NHMA) representing the interests of 50,000 licensed Hispanic physicians in the United States, I write to share our organization's strong support for your bipartisan legislation, the Battlefield Excellence Through Superior Training (BEST) Practices Act (H.R. 1095 / S. 587).

If passed, this bill will improve military medical training and patient care for the more than 150,000 Hispanic and Latino active duty service members and others in the military while also saving taxpayer dollars.

Throughout the civilian sector and at many military facilities, advanced human patient simulators are widely used for emergency medical training. These technologies recreate human anatomy and physiology, allow for repetitive practice of emergency medical procedures until proficiency, improve patient safety, increase provider confidence, provide objective trainee performance feedback to educators, and are cost-effective.

On the other hand, the use of live animals for this training—which is still occurring within some areas of the Department of Defense—is expensive and does not adequately prepare personnel to recognize human anatomy or conduct lifesaving procedures on human patients.

Your legislation sets a realistic timeline for the Pentagon to finish its ongoing transition from the remaining suboptimal animal labs to simulation-based medical training.

We appreciate and support your efforts to ensure that our troops have the best training tools available to help save lives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Elena Rios'.

Elena Rios, MD, MSPH

President and CEO

The Honorable Henry “Hank” Johnson

U.S. House of Representatives

2240 Rayburn House Office Building

Washington, DC 20515