

Congressman Cuellar's FY19 Defense Appropriations Language

1. \$45,000,000 for the Joint Warfighter Medical Research Program

The Committee recommends \$45,000,000 for the Joint Warfighter Medical Research Program. The Committee appreciates the program's focus on the medical needs of the warfighter on the battlefield, and believes priority should be given for research to address the "golden hour" for service members with life threatening injuries, battlefield diagnostics, and medical threats and treatments for warfighters deployed around the world. The "golden hour" policy, which commits to getting wounded servicemembers lifesaving care within the first hour after an injury occurs, was initially put in place to address battlefield casualties. With reports that the Department may not be able to commit to the "golden hour" for service members in future conflicts, the Committee expects the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) to identify current gaps in medical planning and resources, and consider medical capabilities that may mitigate fatalities, including enhancing hemorrhage control research and development. In particular, the Committee encourages research and development of 300 freeze-dried plasma and platelets, in addition to rapidly deployable, all-in-one acute and chronic wound care therapy engineered to address complex trauma and start tissue regeneration. For injuries suffered on the battlefield, the Committee believes that the Department of Defense should make enhancing battlefield diagnostics a priority. The Committee is encouraged by recent technological advances related to traumatic brain injury, including magnetic resonance technology. The Committee is pleased by the development of portable neurological devices in support of mild traumatic brain injury assessment for service members in the field and supports the continued review of benefits that could be gained from deployment of this diagnostic tool. The Committee also notes that advances in exposure science, including environmental and wearable sensors technology and chemical surveillance, partnered with advanced computing, allow for optimized exposure surveillance and health monitoring through rapid and comprehensive measurement of bio signatures, and believes these efforts should be explored. Additionally, the Committee sees advantages to advancing genomics work to identify and counter evolving chemical and biologic threats, and developing medical countermeasures to chemical or biological weapons of mass destruction. Further, the Committee believes that additional research of battlefield treatment is necessary and encourages the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) to explore solutions for life threatening battlefield complications such as sepsis. The Committee also encourages the use of telemedicine and other technologies that would allow for better collection, integration, and transfer of patient data from battlefield medical units through transport and treatment. In preparation for environments military personnel may face while serving, the Committee encourages the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) to establish protocols providing for the training, transport, and treatment for service members exposed to highly infectious diseases.

The Committee also encourages the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) to continue offering competitive grants to applicants from academia, industry, and federal government agencies to expand the chemical control toolbox, and to develop and validate vector management strategies needed to protect deployed military personnel.

2. Protecting Service members from infectious disease

New Report Language: “The Committee recognizes the critical contribution that the Department of Defense research and development portfolio makes in protecting service members from infectious diseases they may encounter on missions around the world and recognizes the need to sustain and support this work by fully funding R&D programs that carry out this work within the Department of Defense Health Program and Department of the Army and Department of the Navy Research, Development, Test and Evaluation budgets, including the Military Infectious Diseases Research Program, the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, and the Navy Medical Research and Development Center. Additionally, several emerging infectious diseases have taken the global community by surprise over the last few decades, including SARs, H1N1 and Ebola. Disease surveillance, rapid detection, outbreak response and epidemiology are essential to providing an early warning of emerging infectious disease threats to service members abroad and global health security in general. The Committee recognizes the important contribution overseas and domestic Department of Defense labs make to these efforts.”

3. Calls for further DoD research of Rare Cancers

RARE CANCERS The National Cancer Institute (NCI) defines rare cancers as cancers that occur in fewer than 15 out of 100,000 people per year. Over 500 rare cancers have been identified by the NCI. Military personnel are uniquely exposed to carcinogens that may increase the risk of certain cancers. The Committee is concerned about the need for a better understanding of rare cancers that may impact service members, and therefore encourages the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) to collect data on the prevalence of rare cancers among service members, and consider ways that the Department can improve the understanding of how rare cancers impact service members.

THE CANCER CENTER AT WALTER REED NATIONAL MILITARY MEDICAL CENTER The Committee recognizes that close cooperation between The John P. Murtha Cancer Center at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) has fostered the partnership between the Murtha Cancer Center and the Oncology Research Information Exchange Network (ORIEN). The Murtha Cancer Center is the only center of excellence for

cancer care in the military health system. This partnership allows the Murtha Cancer Center to collaborate in cancer research with several academic cancer centers that all use a single protocol for long-term health surveillance of cancer patients to correlate patterns in cancer incidence, treatment response, and survivorship with genetic information, demographic data, and other factors. The Committee commends the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) for assisting the Murtha Cancer Center in this partnership and encourages increased support to allow for continued expansion of this effort to deliver enhanced cancer treatment for all service members and their families.

4. *Programmatic Request:* \$10 million for the Therapeutic Service Dog Training Program.