

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 18, 2016

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Defense  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
122 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dick Durbin  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Defense  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
122 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran and Ranking Member Durbin:

As you consider the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Department of Defense Appropriations bill, we respectfully request that you include eating disorders as eligible for research funding under the Peer Reviewed Medical Research Program (PRMRP). Funding through PRMRP offers an important opportunity to study diseases like eating disorders that are not well-understood, have few treatment options, and for which military service confers a higher risk.

In the United States, 30 million Americans experience a clinically significant eating disorder at some time in their life, including anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge eating disorder. These disorders affect women two and a half times more than men. In addition, eating disorders have the highest mortality rate for any mental illness at 20 percent.

Studies show there is a higher prevalence rate among military servicemembers than the civilian population. According to a study published in *Military Medicine*, as many as 30 percent of female cadets and 34 percent of active duty female servicemembers are at-risk for an eating disorder across all branches of the military. These servicemembers also have a very low rate of seeking treatment. Furthermore, children of female servicemembers report similar conditions at a significantly higher rate than the civilian population – over 20 percent.

Despite the high prevalence of Americans with eating disorders, the higher mortality rates of those with eating disorders, and a documented higher incidence of eating disorders among servicemembers, there is currently minimal federal funding for eating disorders research. We believe that including eating disorders as eligible for research funding through the PRMRP for FY 2017 has the potential to benefit military members and their families and vastly improve eating disorder research in this country for all who are or will be affected by this deadly disease. Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,



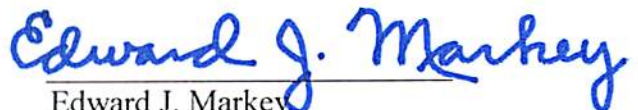
Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator



Kelly A. Ayotte  
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator