

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 8, 2021

The Honorable Jon Tester
Chairman
Subcommittee on Defense
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Defense
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Tester and Ranking Member Shelby:

As you and your colleagues consider the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Department of Defense appropriations bill, we respectfully request that you maintain research funding for eating disorders under the Peer Reviewed Medical Research Program (PRMRP). We appreciate your commitment to military eating disorder research under the PRMRP since the FY 2017 Department of Defense appropriations bill and urge you to continue this support.

Thirty million Americans experience a clinically-significant eating disorder at some point in their lives.¹ Every year in the United States, 10,200 people die from an eating disorder, equivalent to one death every 52 minutes.² Eating disorders also cost the American economy an estimated \$64.7 billion every year, with \$17.7 billion of that cost shouldered by the government.³

Studies show a higher prevalence of eating disorders among service members and their families when compared to the civilian population. According to a recently released report from the Defense Health Board, active duty servicewomen are disproportionately affected by eating disorders, which negatively impact their health and readiness.⁴ Additionally, 21 percent of children of service members and 26 percent of military spouses have an eating disorder, rates three times higher than their civilian peers.⁵

In FY 2017, the PRMRP initially identified an overwhelming number of research applications on military and military family eating disorders, demonstrating the significant need to continue efforts to provide research funding for this issue. We believe that maintaining the eligibility of

1 Eating Recovery Center (June 2021). Eating Disorder Facts & Statistics. *Eating Recovery Center*. <https://www.eatingrecoverycenter.com/conditions/eating-disorders/facts-statistics>.

2 Deloitte Access Economics (June 2020). The Social and Economic Cost of Eating Disorders in the United States of America: A Report for the Strategic Training Initiative for the Prevention of Eating Disorders and the Academy for Eating Disorders. *Harvard University*. <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/striped/report-economic-costs-of-eating-disorders/>.

3 *Id.*

4 Parkinson, M. (November 5, 2020). Decision Brief: Active Duty Women's Health Care Services. *Defense Health Board*. <https://health.mil/Reference-Center/Presentations/2020/11/05/ADWH-Decision-Brief>

5 Waasdorp, C. E. et al. (September 2007). Screening Military Dependent Adolescent Females for Disordered Eating. *Military Medicine*, 172(9), 962-967. doi:10.7205/milmed.172.9.962; Higgins Neyland, M.K. et al (February 2020). Parental Deployment and Distress, and Adolescent Disordered Eating in Prevention-Seeking Military Dependents. *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, 53(2): 201-209. doi:10.1002/eat.23180.

eating disorders under the PRMRP in FY 2022 is important to advancing research that would improve care for our service members and their families. Thank you for your consideration of this request.


Sincerely,



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



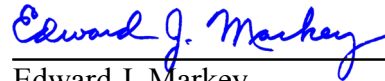
M. Michael Rounds
United States Senator



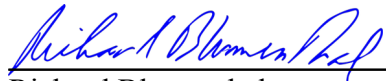
Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator




Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



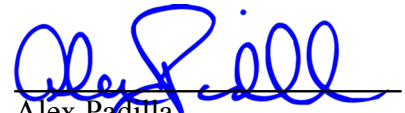
Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



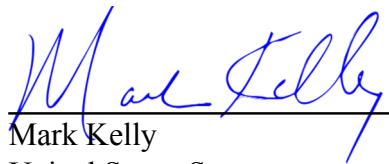
Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Mark Kelly
United States Senator