

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

May 20, 2022

The Honorable Jon Tester
Chairman
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
122 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
122 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Tester and Ranking Member Shelby,

As you begin work on the Fiscal Year 2023 Defense Appropriations Bill, we respectfully ask that you ensure eating disorders are included in the FY 2023 Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs and provide robust funding for the treatment and research of eating disorders. 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.

Service members are affected by eating disorders at elevated and accelerating rates compared to civilians due to risk factors unique to their military experience.¹ In fact, the Defense Health Board released a report, stating that active-duty service women are disproportionately affected by eating disorders², and 16% of female veterans currently suffer from an eating disorder.³ Military spouses and children are also affected at higher rates than the general population; 21% of children of service members and 26% of spouses of service members are symptomatic for an eating disorder,⁴ rates 3 times higher than their civilian peers.⁵ According to the DOD, 19,468 service member dependents received an eating disorder diagnosis from FY 2014 through FY 2018.⁶

¹ Bartlett, B. and Mitchell, K., 2015. Eating disorders in military and veteran men and women: A systematic review. *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, 48(8), pp.1057-1069.

² Parkinson, M., 2021. Decision Brief: Active Duty Women's Health Care Services. [online] Health.mil. Available at: <<https://health.mil/Reference-Center/Presentations/2020/11/05/ADWHDecision-Brief>>

³ Slane, J., Levine, M., Borrero, S., Mattocks, K., Ozier, A., Silliker, N., Bathulapalli, H., Brandt, C. and Haskell, S., 2016. Eating Behaviors: Prevalence, Psychiatric Comorbidity, and Associations With Body Mass Index Among Male and Female Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans. *Military Medicine*, 181(11), pp.e1650-e1656.

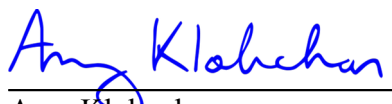
⁴ Waasdorp, C. E., Caboot, J. B., Robinson, C. A., Abraham, A. A., & Adelman, W. P. (2007). Screening Military Dependent Adolescent Females for Disordered Eating. *Military Medicine*, 172(9), 962-967. doi:10.7205/milmed.172.9.962

⁵ Higgins Neyland MK, Shank LM, Burke NL, et al. Parental deployment and distress, and adolescent disordered eating in prevention-seeking military dependents. *Int J Eat Disord*. 2019;1-9. <https://doi.org/10.1002/eat.231806>.

⁶ Armed Forces Health Surveillance Branch, Diagnoses of Eating Disorders, Active Component Service Members, U.S. Armed Forces, 2013-2017, Medical Surveillance Monthly Report, (Silver Spring, MD: June 2018), p. 18

Since FY 2017, the PRMRP has 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 eating disorders under the PRMRP in FY 2023 is important to advancing research that would improve care for our service members and their families. We urge you to include this request in the upcoming package.

Sincerely,



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



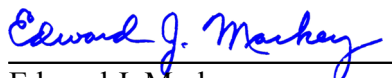
Mike Rounds
United States Senator



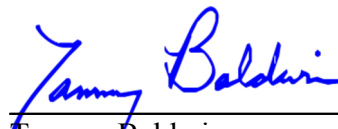
Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



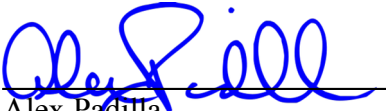
Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



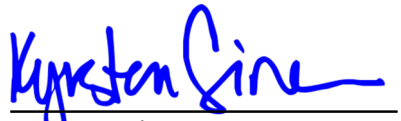
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United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



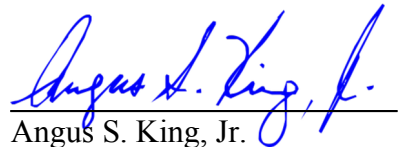
Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator