

Defense Health Research Protected in Final FY18 National Defense Authorization Act

Thanks to the nationwide grassroots advocacy led by the Defense Health Research Consortium (DHRC) and its allied organizations, the final House-Senate conference report to the fiscal year 2018 National Defense Authorization Act will not include provisions restricting medical research at the Department of Defense (DoD).

Four provisions that were originally included in Senate version of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) would have posed direct threats to medical research funded by DoD. In response, thousands of advocates across the country contacted their Representatives and Senators to urge that these provisions be removed from the bill. “Dear Colleague” letters circulated in Congress and signed by 54 Senators and 180 Representatives called on conferees to maintain support for the defense health research programs.

Thankfully, the conferees heard these concerns and responded appropriately by removing the language from the final the National Defense Authorization’s conference report.

Special thanks goes to Senators Richard Durbin (D-IL) and Roy Blunt (R-MO) for leading the Senate letter, and Representatives Ryan Costello (R-PA), Peter King (R-NY), Sanford Bishop (D-GA) and Dave Loebsack (D-IA) for leading the House letter.

The Defense Health Research Consortium is comprised of 36 patient advocacy, medical provider, medical research, and veterans’ organizations. Our efforts were assisted by dozens of allied patient advocacy and medical provider organizations, as well as institutions of higher education and private sector partners.