

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 16, 2018

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
H-405, Main Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Pete Visclosky
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Member Visclosky,

The undersigned members of the Congressional Brain Injury Task Force, and other Members of Congress, respectfully request increased funding for the Department of Defense (DOD) in Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 to identify and care for wounded warriors with traumatic brain injury (TBI) and psychological health issues and to improve research in these critical areas.

TBI continues to be the signature injury among our nation's service members returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. More than 375,000 troops have been diagnosed with mild TBI since 2000. TBI is a complex condition that requires comprehensive, specialized care. In recent years, the DOD has made significant strides in improving both in-theater and post-incident assessment and diagnosis, but still more needs to be done in evaluating troops' ability to return to duty. Intensive and innovative rehabilitation care is also needed for those sustaining severe TBIs with varying levels of disorders of consciousness.

Congressionally-Directed Medical Research Programs – Psychological Health/Traumatic Brain Injury:

The Psychological Health and TBI Research Program, through the Congressionally-Directed Medical Research Program, was created by Congress in Fiscal Year 2007 in response to the injuries sustained by our servicemen and women in the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. With the funding that this program provides, researchers are working in a collaborative manner to prevent, mitigate, and treat the effects of TBI and other psychological health conditions. While great strides have been made, much more work is needed to understand, treat, and prevent TBIs acquired through military service, particularly the impact of blast injury. *We strongly urge you to fund the Psychological Health and TBI Research Program at \$125 million in FY 2019.*

Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center:

Since 1992, the DVBIC has coordinated care for our service members from the battlefield to the community and has engaged in a wide range of TBI research to improve state of the art medical treatment and rehabilitation. Increased funding would allow the work of the DVBIC to continue focusing on enhanced screening techniques for better evaluation, treatment, follow-up, and staying at the forefront of developing technology for field detection of TBI. DVBIC will also continue its multi-center clinical trials to improve medication and rehabilitation, and maintain the 15-year longitudinal study as mandated by the NDAA.

National Intrepid Center of Excellence:

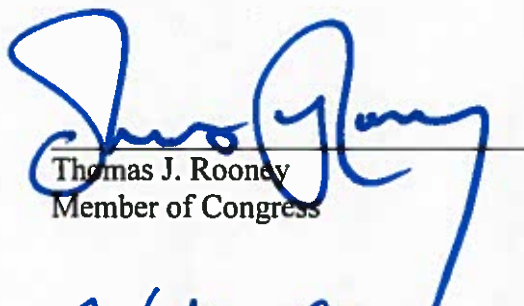
Increased funding is needed for NICOE, which is responsible for treating military personnel diagnosed with TBI and/or Psychological Health for which other programs have not proven successful. We must address the incidence of suicide and the myriad of psychological problems our troops are experiencing as a result of their service on the battlefield. It is imperative that our troops receive every possible opportunity to receive the care and rehabilitation they need and have the ability to either return to theater or reenter the civilian workforce.

We thank the committee for its past work on these important programs, and appreciate your consideration of their inclusion in the FY2019 budget.

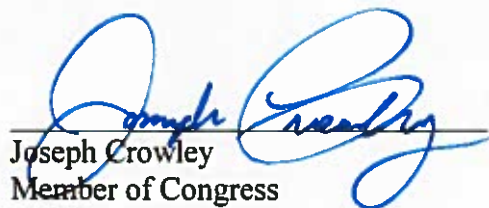
Sincerely,



Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress



Thomas J. Rooney
Member of Congress



Joseph Crowley
Member of Congress



Walter B. Jones
Member of Congress



Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan
Member of Congress



Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress



Filemon Vela Jr.
Member of Congress



Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress



Ruben J. Kihuen
Member of Congress



Juan Vargas
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Keith Ellison

Keith Ellison
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Grace F. Napolitano

Grace F. Napolitano
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Ruben Gallego

Ruben Gallego
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Julia Brownley

Julia Brownley
Member of Congress

Andre Carson

Andre Carson
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Alcee L. Hastings

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Emanuel Cleaver, II

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JOAQUIN CASTRO

Joquin Castro
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Stephen F. Lynch

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Daniel T. Kildee

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Bradley Scott Schneider

Brad Schneider
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Mark Takano

Mark Takano
Member of Congress

Sean Patrick Maloney

Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress

John Garamendi


John Garamendi
Member of Congress



Brian Fitzpatrick
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Carol Shea-Porter
Member of Congress



Beto O'Rourke
Member of Congress


Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress


Judy Chu
Member of Congress


Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress


Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



Diana DeGette
Member of Congress


Scott H. Peters
Member of Congress


Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress


Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress


Jim Himes
Member of Congress


Kyrsten Sinema
Member of Congress


Ted Deutch
Member of Congress



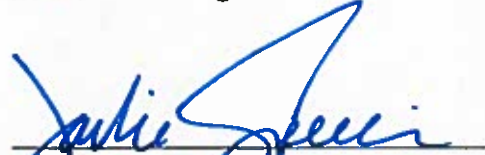
Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



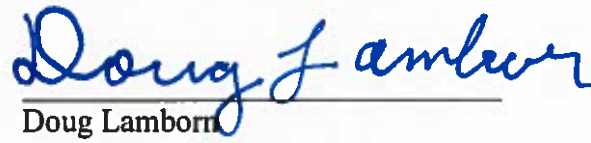
John J. Faso
Member of Congress



Frank LoBiondo
Member of Congress



Jackie Speier
Member of Congress



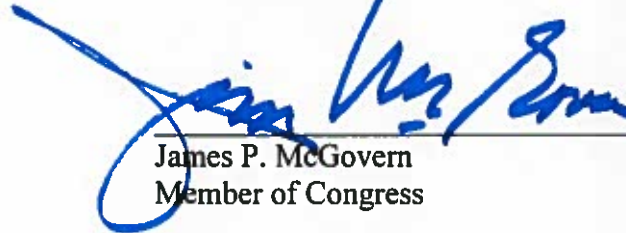
Doug Lamborn
Member of Congress



Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress



Raul Ruiz
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James P. McGovern
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Susan W. Brooks
Member of Congress



Stephanie Murphy
Member of Congress