

March 6, 2024

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Chair
Defense Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
H-405 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Ranking Member
Defense Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
H-405 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Granger, Ranking Member DeLauro, Chair Calvert, and Ranking Member McCollum:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we respectfully request your support to establish a Bladder Cancer Research Program at the Department of Defense (DoD) with \$8 million in dedicated funding for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025. Our organizations represent bladder cancer patients and caregivers as well as the providers who treat them and have first-hand knowledge of the acute need for additional support for bladder cancer research to improve the health of America's veterans.

Bladder cancer is the fourth most commonly diagnosed cancer in the U.S. military and veteran populations and the seventh most commonly diagnosed cancer nationwide. Approximately 3,200 veterans are diagnosed with bladder cancer every year.¹

Prior investment in the DoD's Peer Reviewed Cancer Program has funded groundbreaking bladder cancer research. But dedicated investment in bladder cancer research is needed to build upon this success. The relevance to U.S. veterans is clear: many veterans were exposed to high levels of rainbow herbicides, including Agent Blue and Agent Orange, both of which are recognized as highly toxic.

In the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2021, Congress directed the addition of bladder cancer to the Department of Veterans Affairs list of presumptive diseases linked to Agent Orange exposure. The continued recognition of bladder cancer as a consequence of military service calls for appropriate research funding to address the effects of these exposures. The clear relevance to bladder cancer to current and former servicemembers requires a dedicated research funding stream to better understand and treat this deadly disease.

With your leadership, we can ensure that adequate resources are available to make bladder cancer research and the well-being of bladder cancer patients a national priority by establishing an \$8 million Bladder Cancer Research Program in FY 2025.

¹ Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), May 11, 2022: <https://news.va.gov/103200/bladder-cancer-and-veterans-what-you-need-to-know/#:~:text=Approximately%203%2C200%20Veterans%20are%20diagnosed,inner%20layer%20of%20the%20bladder>

Please contact Vanessa Cramer, Manager, Legislative, Appropriations, and Political Affairs, American Urological Association (AUA), at Vcramer@auanet.org with any questions.

Sincerely,

American Urological Association
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
Association for Pelvic Organ Prolapse Support
Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network
Caregiver Action Network
HealthyWomen
Live UTI Free, Ltd.
Men's Health Network
Multiple Sclerosis Foundation
Spina Bifida Association
United Spinal Association
UTI Health Alliance
Vietnam Veterans of America