



FOVA

FRIENDS OF VA MEDICAL CARE
AND HEALTH RESEARCH

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navref.org/fova
Washington, D.C

January 17, 2024

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chairwoman
Senate Appropriations Committee *and*
Subcommittee on Military Construction,
Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies

The Honorable Susan Collins
Vice Chair
Senate Appropriations Committee

The Honorable John Boozman
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Military Construction,
Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chairwoman
House Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee

The Honorable John Carter
Chair
Subcommittee on Military Construction,
Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies

The Honorable Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Military Construction,
Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies

Dear Sen. Murray, Sen. Collins, Sen. Boozman, Rep. Granger, Rep. DeLauro, Rep. Carter, and Rep. Schultz:

The Friends of VA Medical Care and Health Research (FOVA) coalition, comprised of more than 80 national academic, medical, and scientific societies, voluntary health and patient advocacy groups, as well as veteran-focused associations, writes to underscore the critical importance of your committed support for the Department of Veterans Affairs' Medical and Prosthetic Research Program.

FOVA applauds Congress for their commitment to advancing the health and well-being of our nation's veterans through robust funding for VA research. Enacting the proposed \$938 million for VA medical and prosthetic research will allow VA research to face the nation's evolving challenges and demonstrates a pledge to continue the trajectory of reliable and meaningful growth for the VA research program. Yet, although the necessities will be met with proposed FY24 appropriations, FOVA's position is still looking toward the future of possibility and has urged Congress to **direct at least \$980 million for the VA research program**, reflecting an increase of \$64 million (7%) over the FY 2023 funding level.

The recommendation stems from the notable research VA has achieved in the past few years with advances in precision oncology, including relevant discoveries for the Cancer Moonshot Initiative, as well as increasing veteran's access to cutting-edge health care via groundbreaking research trials. These advances, coupled with first-of-their-kind programs like the VA Million Veteran Program (MVP) and research on toxic exposures, highlight the significance of maintaining a fixed focus on appropriate resources for growth.

FOVA recognizes the demands facing Congress on the FY24 spending bill, but despite these challenges, FOVA encourages Congress to prioritize and safeguard the trajectory of VA research appropriations with an eye on American discovery. This sustained support is vital for advancing existing research initiatives, recruiting and retaining top-tier researchers, and addressing critical gaps in veteran healthcare.

Additionally, FOVA also emphasizes the need for continued investment in physical and information technology infrastructure which is easily overshadowed in the VA without its own budget line. Allocating at least \$100 million for major and minor construction, along with at least \$22 million for the Office of Information and Technology, will ensure that the VA research program operates at its full potential.

We respectfully urge Congress to provide unwavering support for VA research appropriations in FY 2024. Your continued commitment to the health and well-being of our veterans is deeply appreciated and makes a lasting impact on the lives of those who have served our nation.

Sincerely,

The FOVA Executive Committee

Roscoe Butler

Paralyzed Veterans of America

Gary Ewart

American Thoracic Society

Erica Froyd

Association of American Medical Colleges

Jon Retzer

Disabled American Veterans

K. Conwell Smith

American Psychological Association

Rashi Romanoff

National Association of Veterans Research and Education Foundations

Jennifer Zeitzer

Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology

For a complete list of FOVA coalition members, [click here](#).