

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 9, 2007

The Honorable Daniel Inouye
Chairman
Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Defense
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ted Stevens
Ranking Member
Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Defense
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Inouye and Ranking Member Stevens:

We appreciate your past support of biomedical research conducted by the Department of Defense's (DoD) Neurotoxin Exposure Treatment Program (NETRP). This research is critical to people suffering from Parkinson's and other neurodegenerative diseases. We respectfully request \$50 million in funding for NETRP in the U.S. Army Military Operational Medicine Research Program under the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command for fiscal year 2008.

As you are aware, American troops routinely are exposed to a wide range of chemicals, low-level radiation, and other external stressors and toxins such as jet fuel, radar, sonar, lasers, pesticides and herbicides. Scientists believe these exposures increase the risk of developing neurodegenerative conditions, particularly Parkinson's disease. These conditions negatively impact the readiness of American military forces since they result in the permanent loss of brain and nerve cells.

NETRP was established to investigate the causes, diagnosis and treatments primarily of Parkinson's. NETRP-funded research is working to discover the causes, prevention methods, best treatments and cures for neurological diseases. The scientific findings from NETRP may provide DoD with innovations in material design, avoidance protocols for unnecessary harmful exposures and neuroprotective drugs to prevent damage in the first place, which will considerably improve military readiness. Furthermore, the early detection of nerve-cell loss caused by such toxic exposures may provide DoD with better methods of evaluating warfighter performance and faster ways of detecting potential impairments.

However, the military is not the only recipient of the benefits of the NETRP, as any breakthroughs in prevention, detection and treatment of neurodegenerative conditions may be immediately applied to civilians—particularly the more than one million Americans with Parkinson's disease and the additional 60,000 people diagnosed each year.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to provide the DoD, peer-reviewed NETRP with \$50 million in funding for fiscal year 2008. This level of funding is necessary to prevent cuts to critical NETRP funded research projects. This is not an expansion of the program; rather, it is the funding NETRP needs to fulfill its mission to conduct potentially life-saving research.

Thank you again for your support.

Warm Regards,

Nellie Stenerow

Ch. Stenerow

Dick Deuk

Joe T. Rubin

Em Bayh

Hillary Rodham Clinton

M. W. G.

Jack Reed

Ken Salazar

Tom Harkin

John Warner

Noah Coleman

Robert M. Menendez

Bob Menendez

Samuel Alito

Chuck Schumer