

The Honorable (Representative's Name)
(Office Address)
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative (Name):

As someone closely touched by Neurofibromatosis (NF), I am writing to thank you for including \$25 million for the Army's Neurofibromatosis Research Program as part of the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP) in the Fiscal 2010 Department of Defense Appropriations bill. The modest investment in NF research over the past thirteen years has already resulted in major breakthroughs. However, I believe that we must continue to invest in research if we are to continue to advance towards treatments and cures for NF and the numerous diseases associated with it.

NF involves the uncontrolled growth of tumors along the nervous system, which can result in terrible disfigurement, deformity, deafness, blindness, brain tumors, cancer and death. NF is the most common neurological disorder caused by a single gene and it affects approximately 100,000 Americans. However, because of NF's close connection to many common diseases and disorders, such as cancer, learning disabilities, heart disease, memory loss, and brain tumors, research on NF stands to benefit 175 million Americans in this generation alone.

NF research can also benefit the military since the disease is connected to nervous system impairment and war-related illnesses. Because NF manifests itself in the nervous system, the Army-supported research on NF addresses peripheral nerve regeneration after injury from such things as missile wounds and chemical toxins. Findings generated by research on NF can make important progress in our understanding of wound healing, as well as in investigating genetic mechanisms which involve not only the nervous system, but also other cancers.

Anything you can do to ensure this funding is preserved during the conference committee process is greatly appreciated. Thank you again for your support of this vital program.