

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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The Honorable Jon Tester  
Chair  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins  
Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Tester and Ranking Member Collins:

In 2024, there will be an estimated 310,720 new cases of invasive breast cancer diagnosed in women, 2,790 cases diagnosed in men, and an additional 56,500 cases of ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS) diagnosed in women.

Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death for women in the United States after lung cancer. It is estimated that this year, 42,250 women and 530 men will die of breast cancer. Female active-duty Service members have a 20-40% higher incidence rate of breast cancer than the public. The incident rate of breast cancer for active-duty women is seven times higher than the average incident rate of fifteen other cancer types across all Service Members.

While some progress has been made to end this disease, much work remains to be done. As a nation, we must continue to show a commitment to changing these statistics. Fortunately, thanks to your leadership and support, as well as that of the DOD Subcommittee and the entire Appropriations Committee, the Department of Defense (DOD) Peer Reviewed Breast Cancer Research Program has led the way in the fight against breast cancer since 1992.

To continue this progress moving forward, we ask that you support robust funding for the program in FY2025. As you are aware, the DOD Peer Reviewed BCRP plays a leading role in the fight against breast cancer through its innovative approaches and focus on research that will end the disease. The mission of the DOD BCRP is a world without breast cancer. The program's vision is to end breast cancer for Service Members, Veterans, and all individuals by funding innovative, high-impact research through a partnership of scientists and consumers.

The BCRP challenges scientists to pursue high-risk, high-reward research, explore new paradigms that could lead to critical discoveries, and make an unprecedented impact on breast cancer. The BCRP also promotes synergistic collaborations across disciplines. The meaningful and unprecedented partnership of scientists and consumers has been the foundation of this model program from the very beginning.

This unique collaboration is successful: every year, researchers submit proposals that reach the highest level asked for them by the program. The DOD BCRP is a model medical research program, respected throughout the cancer and broader medical community for its innovative, transparent, and accountable approach. It is incredibly streamlined and efficient, with a flexibility that allows the Army to administer it with unparalleled effectiveness.

The program's specific focus on breast cancer allows it to rapidly support innovative proposals that reflect the most recent discoveries in the field. It is responsive not just to the scientific community but also to the public. The revolutionary research performed through the program and the unique vision it maintains can benefit not just breast cancer but all cancers and other diseases.

The DOD BCRP has and continues to transform biomedical research. We ask that you recognize the importance of what has been initiated by the Appropriations Committee. You have set in motion an innovative and highly efficient approach to the fight against breast cancer. Please continue supporting and investing in the DOD Peer Reviewed BCRP and include robust funding in the Department of Defense Appropriations bill for FY2025. This is research that will help us win this very real and devastating war against a cruel disease. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

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