United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 15, 2010

The Honorable Daniel Inouye, Chairman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense
U.S. Senate
119 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense
U.S. Senate
119 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Inouye and Ranking Member Cochran:

There are still nearly 41,000 women and 450 men who die each year of breast cancer. We do not yet know how to prevent the disease. We do not have an accurate, reliable early detection method, and we do not have a cure. This year alone, more than 240,000 women and 2030 men will be diagnosed with breast cancer. While we do not have the answers, we know that the worldwide research community is making progress. We are confident that with the right investments and structure, we can find prevention and cures. The Department of Defense peer-reviewed Breast Cancer Research Program is the best investment we can continue to make for all of us.

The Appropriations Committee has shown great determination and leadership in the search for answers by continuing to fund the DOD BCRP, and by continuing to maintain the integrity of this model program of research. The DOD BCRP's progress in the fight against breast cancer has been made possible by this Committee's investment in breast cancer research. This is a **long standing, competitive, peer-reviewed program that has resulted in unprecedented progress and we ask that you continue your support for this Program and include funding of $150 million for fiscal year (FY) 2011 for the DOD BCRP in the Department of Defense Appropriations bill text.**

The DOD BCRP has established itself as a model medical research program. The critical work of this Program must be continued at this level of funding because:

- **It is innovative and unique.** The Program has a unique grants structure that allows it to be more flexible and fund innovative, high-risk, high-return research. The Program is able to quickly respond to current scientific advances, and is able to fill gaps by focusing on research that is traditionally under-funded.

- **It is a demonstrated success.**

- The Institute of Medicine, in two analyses of the Program, overwhelmingly supports the DOD BCRP's continuation, stating, "the program fills a unique niche among public and private funding sources for cancer research. It is not duplicative of other programs and is a promising vehicle for forging new ideas and scientific breakthroughs in the nation's fight against breast cancer."

- Incredible discoveries that offer fascinating insights into the biology of breast cancer have come as a result of the Program. For example, the **DOD BCRP funded a vital component of the revolutionary work that led to the development of the innovative drug Herceptin**. From new methods of extracting breast cancer cells at their earliest stages, to unprecedented research into gene/environment interaction and quality of life issues, this Program leads the way in generating new approaches to breast cancer prevention, treatment, and early detection.

- **It is efficient.** In fact, 90% of the appropriated funds go directly to competitive, peer-reviewed research grants awarded only to the best science.

- **It is transparent and accountable to the public.**
  - This is evidenced by the inclusion of consumer advocates at both the peer and programmatic review levels. The consumer perspective helps the scientists understand how the research will affect the community and allows for funding decisions based on the concerns and needs of patients and the medical community.

  - Each researcher who receives funds from the Program must present their results to the American people online at the Program website and at public meetings called "Era of Hope". The transparency of the DOD BCRP allows scientists, consumers and the American public to see the exceptional progress made in breast cancer research.

The millions of American women living with breast cancer, as well as their friends and families, hope that a means of preventing, curing, and better treating this disease will soon be found. To help further the search for answers, **we ask that you fund the DOD BCRP at $150 million for FY2011 in the Department of Defense Appropriations bill text.**

Sincerely,

Tom Harkin
Senator Tom Harkin

Susan M. Collins
Senator Susan M. Collins

Arlen Specter
Senator Arlen Specter

Olympia Snowe
Senator Olympia J. Snowe

Senator Daniel K. Akaka

Senator Evan Bayh

Senator Mark Begich

Senator Jeff Bingaman

Senator Christopher S. Bond

Senator Barbara Boxer

Senator Sherrod Brown

Senator Roland W. Burris

Senator Benjamin L. Cardin

Senator Robert P. Casey, Jr.

Senator Christopher J. Dodd

Senator Russell D. Feingold

Senator Al Franken

Senator Kirsten E. Gillibrand

Senator Chuck Grassley

Senator Judd Gregg

Senator Kay R. Hagan

Senator Mike Johanns

Senator Tim Johnson

Senator Edward E. Kaufman

Senator John F. Kerry

Senator Amy Klobuchar

Senator Herb Kohl

Senator Frank R. Lautenberg

Senator Patrick J. Leahy

Senator Joseph I. Lieberman

Senator Blanche L. Lincoln

Senator Robert Menendez

Senator Jeff Merkley

Senator Barbara A. Mikulski

Senator Jack Reed

Senator Harry Reid

Senator Bernard Sanders

Senator Charles E. Schumer

Senator Jeanne Shaheen

Senator Debbie Stabenow

Senator Jon Tester

Senator John Thune

Senator Mark Udall

Senator Tom Udall

Senator David Vitter

Senator Sheldon Whitehouse

Senator Ron Wyden

Senator Scott P. Brown

Senator Mary L. Landrieu