

# FOVA

## Friends of VA Medical Care and Health Research

A coalition of national  
organizations committed to quality  
care for America's veterans

### Executive Committee

#### Charles Clayton

Alliance for Academic  
Internal Medicine  
202-861-9351  
cclayton@im.org

#### Gary Ewart

American Thoracic Society  
202-785-3355  
gewart@lungusadc.org

#### Heather Kelly, Ph.D.

American Psychological  
Association  
202-336-5932  
hkelly@apa.org

#### Matthew Shick

Association of  
American Medical Colleges  
202-828-0525  
mshick@aamc.org

September 27, 2007

The Honorable David R. Obey  
Chair  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey:

As the members of the Friends of VA Medical Care and Health Research (FOVA), the undersigned organizations encourage you to support a fiscal year (FY) 2008 appropriation of \$500 million for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical and Prosthetic Research Program during the upcoming conference on the related bills.

The VA Medical and Prosthetics Research Program is one of the nation's premier research endeavors and attracts high-caliber clinicians to deliver care and conduct research in VA health care facilities. A \$500 million appropriation in FY 2008 will allow VA to direct vital resources to research that benefits all veterans. The additional funding will ensure that VA's spending power keeps pace with inflation; support research into diseases and impairments affecting soldiers returning from Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom including post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, multiple amputations, and extensive burns; and provide support for research on conditions long prevalent among veterans such as diabetes, spinal cord injury, substance abuse, mental illnesses, heart diseases, infectious diseases, and prostate cancer.

FOVA commends both the House and Senate for increasing funding for necessary infrastructure repairs via the VA Minor Construction account. However, FOVA would like to reiterate the need for dedicated funding for research facility improvements. Under the current system, research must compete in the minor construction budget with other facility needs for basic infrastructure and physical plant support. This unbalanced system has led to an accumulation of necessary research facility upgrades including improved ventilation, electrical supply, plumbing, and space configuration. FOVA recommends a \$45 million allocation for research facilities improvements under the minor construction account in FY 2008.

We ask that you consider these perspectives when examining the needs for VA in FY 2008 and use your influence to provide sufficient funding to enable VA to continue robust medical, rehabilitation, and health services research programs. Please contact FOVA Executive Committee members Charles P. Clayton (202-861-9351; cclayton@im.org), Matthew Shick (202-828-0525; mshick@aamc.org), or Gary Ewart (202-785-3355; gewart@lungusadc.org) with questions or comments about FOVA or these recommendations.

Sincerely,  
FOVA Executive Committee

FY 2008 FOVA Members  
Administrators of Internal Medicine  
Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine  
Alliance for Aging Research

American Academy of Neurology  
American Academy of Ophthalmology  
American Society of Pain Medicine  
American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases  
American Association of Anatomists  
American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine  
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy  
American Association of Neurological Surgeons  
American Association of Spinal Cord Injury Nurses  
American Association of Spinal Cord Injury Psychologists and Social Workers  
American College of Physicians  
American College of Rheumatology  
American Dental Education Association  
American Federation for Medical Research  
American Gastroenterological Association  
American Geriatrics Society  
American Heart Association  
American Hospital Association  
American Hospital Association  
American Lung Association  
American Military Retirees Association  
American Occupational Therapy Association  
American Optometric Association  
American Paraplegia Society  
American Physiological Society  
American Podiatric Medical Association  
American Psychiatric Association  
American Psychological Association  
American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology  
American Society for Microbiology  
American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics  
American Society of Anesthesiologists  
American Society of Hematology  
American Society of Nephrology  
American Thoracic Society  
Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care International  
Association of Academic Health Centers  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Association of Professors of Medicine  
Association of Program Directors in Internal Medicine  
Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry  
Association of Specialty Professors  
Association of VA Chiefs of Medicine  
Association of VA Nurse Anesthetists  
Blinded Veterans Association  
Clerkship Directors in Internal Medicine  
Coalition for American Trauma Care  
Coalition for Health Services Research  
Digestive Disease National Coalition  
Congress of Neurological Surgeons  
Digestive Disease National Coalition  
Disabled American Veterans  
Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology  
Gerontological Society of America  
Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans of America  
Legion of Valor of the USA, Inc.

Medicine-Pediatrics Program Directors Association  
Military Officers Association of America  
National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research  
National Alliance on Mental Illness  
National Association for Uniformed Services  
National Association of VA Dermatologists  
National Association of VA Physicians and Dentists  
National Association of Veterans' Research and Education Foundations  
Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs  
Osteogenesis Imperfecta Foundation  
Pain Care Coalition  
Paralyzed Veterans of America  
Research!America  
Society for Investigative Dermatology  
Society for Neuroscience  
Society for Women's Health Research  
Society of General Internal Medicine  
The American Pain Foundation  
The Endocrine Society  
The FAIR Foundation  
United Spinal Association  
Veterans Affairs Physician Assistant Association  
Vietnam Veterans of America