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The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health-Human Services, Education, and Related
Agencies

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health-Human Services, Education, and Related
Agencies

The Honorable Pete Visclosky
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense

Dear Chairs DeLauro and Visclosky and Ranking Members Cole and Calvert:

As you consider appropriations for Fiscal Year (FY) 2021, we write to request the inclusion of timely committee recommendations on sleep and sleep disorders within the Committee Report accompanying the House FY 2021 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (LHHS) Appropriations Bill. We would also like to request the continued inclusion of “sleep disorders and restriction” as conditions eligible for study through the Department of Defense (DoD) Peer-Reviewed Medical Research Program (PRMRP) within the Committee Report accompanying the FY 2021 DoD Appropriations Bill.

Sleep impacts nearly every system of the body and affects the progression of many medical conditions. Millions of Americans are impacted by sleep disorders and, in general, healthy sleep is a major public health and safety issue. However, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently sunset the only public health effort focused on sleep, the National Healthy Sleep Awareness Project (NHSAP), citing a lack of dedicated resources. For FY 2020, the House LHHS Appropriations Bill proposed a “Chronic Disease Education and Awareness Program,” which would utilize a competitive grant process to strengthen the science base for prevention, education, and public health awareness for a variety of chronic diseases, including sleep disorders. We ask for the inclusion of this program once again for FY 2021 and ask the Committee to provide \$5,000,000 for this new effort to address chronic diseases that do not already have a specialized account under the CDC.

With the ongoing investments in the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the sleep and circadian research portfolio has grown and facilitated meaningful scientific progress, which includes the 2017 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine. While this progress is certainly encouraging, more work is needed to deliver breakthroughs to improve outcomes for patients suffering from various sleep disorders. Therefore, we respectfully recommend the Committee include the following report language in the accompanying report of its FY 2021 LHHS bill:

“National Center on Sleep Disorders Research [NCSDR].—The committee commends the ongoing work of NCSDR to reinvigorate sleep, circadian, and sleep disorders research activities across

the government, and notes impactful new projects through the HEAL Initiative and studying the relationship between sleep and stroke. NCSDR is encouraged to continue to build meaningful partnerships across federal agencies and further coordinate research in this area.”

“Sleep Disorders.—The Committee notes the leadership of the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) in advancing research into under-represented sleep disorders, such as narcolepsy and restless legs syndrome. NINDS is encouraged to bolster these activities and advance initiatives that advance scientific understanding of specific sleep disorders impacting patients.”

Finally, The DoD is a leader on sleep research with critical projects on combat readiness, fatigue, and the relationship between sleep and mental health challenges. These projects are often coordinated with NIH and the Veterans Administration, but they are made possible through the PRMRP. To that end, we request the continued inclusion of “sleep disorders and restriction” on the PRMRP’s annual eligible conditions through the Committee Report accompanying the FY 2021 DoD Appropriations Bill.

On behalf of the sleep disorders community, we appreciate your consideration of our requests and your willingness to engage on these critical issues.

Sincerely,



Adam B. Schiff
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

MEMBER OF CONGRESS

List of Signatories

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