



Hon. Doris O. Matsui
Member of Congress

Doris O. Matsui

**Support Research into Fatal Bone Marrow Failure Diseases in FY2013
Appropriations**

From: The Honorable Doris O. Matsui
Sent By: louis.agnello@mail.house.gov
Date: 3/7/2012

Dear Colleague:

Please join me in sending the attached letter to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense in support of additional programmatic funding for research into bone marrow failure disorders.

Since 2008, the Bone Marrow Failure Disease Research Program at the Department of Defense has funded cutting edge research into myelodysplastic syndromes (MDS), aplastic anemia, and paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria (PNH), all of which occur when stem cells inside the bone marrow stop making enough healthy blood cells. In the past five fiscal years, Congress has appropriated nearly \$17 million for research into bone marrow failure diseases. This research is increasingly important to the U.S. Armed Services, as recent data indicate that service personnel who were deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan may have been exposed to environmental factors associated with bone marrow failure diseases.

Bone marrow failure diseases can strike any person of any age, of any gender and any race, in any neighborhood, anywhere in the world. They are life-threatening diseases that currently affect tens of thousands of men, women, and children every year. By studying Armed Forces personnel who have been diagnosed with these conditions, we can gain a much better understanding not only of what causes bone marrow failure diseases, but also of how to protect our troops - and the general public - in the future.

We are committed to finding cures for these tragic illnesses, and we request your support to ensure that the fiscal year 2013 Defense Department appropriations bill provides a continuation of funding for the Bone Marrow Failure Disease Research Program.

The Bone Marrow Failure Disease program is not an earmark. This request will be considered programmatic, and Members should submit the request online.

I respectfully urge you to join me in expressing your support for increased bone marrow failure disease research by signing on to the attached letter to the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee. If you have any questions or would like to sign, please contact Louis Agnello in Representative Matsui's office at Louis.agnello@mail.house.gov(x5-7163) by **COB Friday, March 16, 2012.**

Sincerely,

Doris Matsui
Member of Congress

March _____, 2012

The Honorable C.W. Bill Young

Chairman
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Norm Dicks
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Young and Ranking Member Dicks:

As you begin preparing your fiscal year 2013 Department of Defense appropriations bill, we respectfully request a continuation of funding for the Bone Marrow Failure Disease Research Program.

Bone marrow failure diseases—including aplastic anemia, myelodysplastic syndromes (MDS), and paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria (PNH)—occur when stem cells inside the bone marrow stop making enough healthy blood cells. These life-threatening, non-contagious diseases can strike any person of any age, of any gender or any race, in any neighborhood anywhere in the world.

Anecdotal data indicate that members of the Armed Forces who were deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan may have been exposed to environmental contaminants associated with these diseases. Though they affect thousands of men, women, and children every year, we still know remarkably little about what causes these diseases, and we know even less about how to neutralize them.

Thanks to your support, Congress recognizes the urgent need to investigate bone marrow failure disorders. The Department of Defense Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2012 provided \$3.2 million for the Bone Marrow Failure Disease research initiative within the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program. This much-needed funding has given investigators a stable source of support to augment our basic understanding of these diseases. By studying military personnel who have been diagnosed with these disorders, we can gain a much better understanding of what may be causing them. Most important, we can also begin to understand how to protect and treat members of the Armed Forces—and the general public—who contract these life-threatening diseases.

We respectfully urge you to provide a continuation of funding for the Bone Marrow Failure Disease research initiative in fiscal year 2013 through the Defense Department's Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program.

Thank you for your leadership and attention to our request.

Sincerely,

Doris Matsui,
Member of Congress