

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 7, 2011

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye  
Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Defense  
Senate Dirksen Office Building, Rm 122  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Defense  
Senate Dirksen Office Building, Rm 122  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Inouye and Ranking Member Cochran:

On behalf of the millions of Americans touched each year by ovarian cancer, we are writing to thank you and the Defense Subcommittee for your sustained support in recent years of the Ovarian Cancer Research Program at the Department of Defense (DOD OCRP). Specifically, we sincerely urge you to continue your strong support and to maintain the current funding levels for the DOD OCRP for Fiscal Year 2012.

One in 69 women will develop ovarian cancer, and less than half will survive for five years. A woman dies of ovarian cancer every hour. It is expected that more than 22,000 women will be diagnosed with the disease this year and more than 14,000 women will die from ovarian cancer in 2011.

During the last five years, over 2,600 members of our military or their families have been hospitalized for ovarian cancer or suspected ovarian cancer. These individuals have spent over 14,000 bed days of care in military treatment facilities.

The Department of Defense Ovarian Cancer Research Program which belongs to US Army Medical Research and Materiel Command (USAMRMC) supports the forward momentum of critical research to understand, prevent, and treat this disease that affects the warfighter, military beneficiaries, and the general public. DOD OCRP is structured to facilitate nontraditional collaboration between civilian and military research programs. The involvement of DOD OCRP in research performed at both civilian and military health facilities nationwide creates a unique shared process for success that raises the standard and scope of the investigational process. Designed to promote increased project flexibility, DOD OCRP research produces innovative, high impact, and valuable results through strategic partnerships between patient advocates, lab scientists, and clinicians.

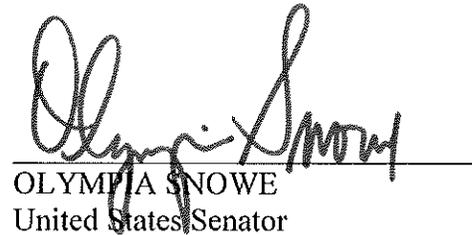
The OCRP's unique method of funding ovarian cancer research has yielded tremendous breakthroughs in the fight against ovarian cancer, such as:

- a new treatment using nanoparticles to deliver diphtheria toxin-encoding DNA to ovarian cancer cells, leaving healthy cells unaffected;
- the discovery of a compound that potentially inhibits a form of ovarian cancer that makes up 40% of ovarian cancer tumors;
- the finding that ovarian cancer cells are sensitive to glucose deprivation and resveratrol treatment; and
- identifying the earliest molecular changes associated with BRCA1- and BRCA2-related ovarian cancers, leading to biomarker identification for early detection.

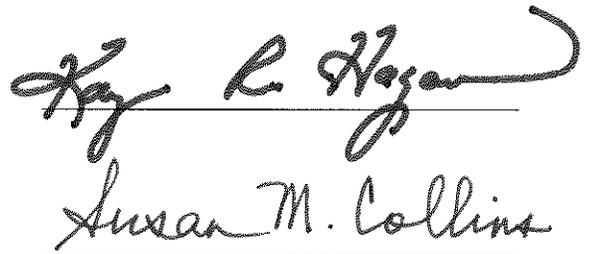
Today, ovarian cancer researchers are still struggling to develop the first ovarian cancer screening test. With traditional research models largely unsuccessful, the innovative grants awarded by the DOD OCRP are integral in moving this field of research forward. Military beneficiaries will benefit in the same way as the entire American population stands to gain from research into the detection, treatment and cure for this deadly disease. For every dollar that is saved from reducing the cost of cancer care for our military, another dollar can be used to support the warfighter. The DOD Ovarian Cancer Research Program is making a difference in the lives of military beneficiaries and the general public. Again, we thank you for your attention to this request.

Sincerely,

  
ROBERT MENENDEZ  
United States Senator

  
OLYMPIA SNOWE  
United States Senator

  
John F. Kerry

  
Susan M. Collins

  
Debbie Stabenow

  
Kirsten E. Gillibrand

  
Orrin Hatch

  
Ron Wyden

  
Richard Blumenthal

  
Herb Kohl

  
Jeffrey A. Merkley