

Leading Melanoma Organizations Applaud Congress for Supporting \$20 million for Defense-Funded Melanoma Research

WASHINGTON, DC, December 19, 2019 – The [Melanoma Research Alliance](#) (MRA) and the [Melanoma Research Foundation](#) (MRF) applaud Congress for approving \$20 million in funding for the Department of Defense (DoD)-funded Peer Reviewed Melanoma Research Program in the Fiscal 2020 Department of Defense Appropriations bill.

In the Fiscal 2019 Defense Appropriations bill, Congress provided \$10 million for the Peer Reviewed Melanoma Research Program. By doubling the appropriation in this year's bill, Congress acknowledges the serious health risk melanoma poses to Americans and American servicemembers. This program will support research toward new breakthroughs in melanoma diagnosis and treatment that will benefit America's servicemembers, their family members and the general population.

As the leading non-profit funders of cutting-edge melanoma science, MRA and the MRF welcome this historic and bipartisan commitment to advance melanoma research.

Since 2009, melanoma has been eligible to receive Defense funding through the Peer Reviewed Cancer Research Program. While conditions like breast cancer and lung cancer benefitted from dedicated funding during this time, melanoma researchers were in competition with over a dozen other cancer types to secure a portion of PRCRP funding.

"We commend Congress for providing \$20 million for the Defense-funded Peer Reviewed Melanoma Research Program, doubling the current appropriation. Melanoma is one of the most frequently diagnosed cancers among male and female service members, and those rates only increase in members and veterans age 50 and beyond," said Kyleigh LiPira, MBA, Chief Executive Officer of the MRF.

MRA CEO, Michael Kaplan, shared similar enthusiasm, noting, *"not only is this a huge need for those that serve our country, but the benefits of melanoma research pay dividends for so many other cancers. In fact, checkpoint immunotherapies first approved for melanoma in the last decade have since been approved as treatment options for more than 15 other cancers, demonstrating a ripple effect of melanoma research across oncology."*

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About Melanoma

Melanoma is one of the fastest growing cancers in the United States and can strike men and women of all ages, races and skin types. In 2019, approximately 96,000 Americans are expected to be diagnosed with Stage I-IV melanoma and another 96,000 will be diagnosed with melanoma in situ – totaling over 192,000 total diagnoses. Melanoma is the most common form of cancer for young adults 25- to 29-years-old and the second most common cancer in adolescents and young adults 15- to 29-years-old. The majority of melanomas occur on the skin and melanoma is the deadliest form of skin cancer. Melanoma can also occur in the eye (ocular, or uveal melanoma), in mucous membranes (mucosal melanoma), or even beneath fingernails and toenails.

About the Melanoma Research Alliance

Founded in 2007 under the auspices of the Milken Institute, with the generous support of Debra and Leon Black, the Melanoma Research Alliance exists to accelerate treatment options and find a cure for melanoma. As the largest nonprofit funder of melanoma research, it has dedicated over \$110 million and leveraged an additional \$200 million towards its mission. Through its support, MRA has championed revolutions in immunotherapy, targeted therapies, novel combinations and diagnostics. Due to the ongoing support of its founders, 100 percent of donations to MRA go directly to its melanoma research program. MRA's ability to fund wide-ranging research in melanoma is amplified by unique collaborations and partnerships with individuals, private foundations, and corporations. Visit <http://www.CureMelanoma.org> for more information, or follow us on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#).

About the Melanoma Research Foundation

The Melanoma Research Foundation (MRF) is the largest independent organization devoted to melanoma. Committed to the support of medical research in finding effective treatments and eventually a cure for melanoma, the MRF also educates patients and physicians about prevention, diagnosis and the treatment of melanoma. The MRF is a committed advocate for the melanoma community, helping to raise awareness of this disease and the need for a cure. The MRF's website (www.melanoma.org) is the premier source for melanoma information seekers. Find the MRF on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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