

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
331 Hart Senate Office Building,  
District of Columbia 20510-0504

Dear Senator Feinstein:

As someone closely touched by Neurofibromatosis (NF), I write to request your support for the Army's Neurofibromatosis Research Program in the Fiscal 2010 Department of Defense Appropriations bill. I appreciate the support that you have shown NF research in the past and hope for your continued support this year.

**The House of Representatives included \$25 million for NF research as part of the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP) for FY2010, and I write to encourage the Senate to also include \$25 million for this program when the FY2010 Defense Appropriations bill is considered.** Significant advances in NF research have been made, due in large part to the Army's program, and leading researchers are now on the threshold of a treatment and a cure for this terrible disease.

NF involves the uncontrolled growth of tumors along the nervous system, which can result in terrible disfigurement, deformity, deafness, blindness, brain tumors, cancer and death. NF is the most common neurological disorder caused by a single gene and it affects approximately 100,000 Americans. However, because of NF's close connection to many common diseases and disorders, such as cancer, learning disabilities, heart disease, memory loss, and brain tumors, research on NF stands to benefit 175 million Americans in this generation alone.

NF research can also benefit the military since the disease is connected to nervous system impairment and war-related illnesses. Because NF manifests itself in the nervous system, the Army-supported research on NF addresses peripheral nerve regeneration after injury from such things as missile wounds and chemical toxins. Findings generated by research on NF can make important progress in our understanding of wound healing, as well as in investigating genetic mechanisms which involve not only the nervous system, but also other cancers.

The modest investment in NF research over the past thirteen years has already resulted in major breakthroughs. However, I believe that we must continue to invest in research if we are to continue to advance towards treatments and cures for NF and the numerous diseases associated with it. I ask that you include **\$25 million for the Army's NF research program in the Fiscal Year 2010 Department of Defense Appropriations bill.**

Thank you for your attention to this request.