

**!!ACTION ALERT!!**

***Contact the office of your Senator serving on the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee and thank them for*** the inclusion of “dystonia” as a condition eligible for study through the Department of Defense Peer-Reviewed Medical Research Program during the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 appropriations process and ask that they work with their colleagues to ensure that it is included in the final list.

**Background**

Each year, the United States Senate crafts an annual Department of Defense (DOD) appropriations bill, which includes a list of conditions that are deemed “eligible for study” through the Peer-Reviewed Medical Research Program (PRMRP). In order for a condition to be included, Senators need to support the condition and officially ask for its inclusion. Senators have many competing appropriations priorities and in order for them to support a condition-specific request, they need to be educated and asked to do so by their constituents. **(You)**

As a result of grassroots outreach, the Senate has recognized dystonia as a condition eligible for study annually for several years. This support allows dystonia medical researchers to compete for $360 million in federal research funding each year.

Currently, the government is operating on a Continuing Appropriations Resolution (CR) until December 20th. Senators will be working until then on the FY 2025 DOD appropriations bill and will be deciding which conditions will be included on the next PRMRP eligible conditions list. The Senate Appropriations Defense Subcommittee released and approved an initial list that included “dystonia” earlier in the year. At this critical juncture, please reach out to the offices of your Senators and ask that they “once again support the inclusion of ‘dystonia’ in the DOD PRMRP’s eligible conditions list in FY 2025.”

**Take Action**

* Contact your [Senators](https://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm) and ask that they support the inclusion of **“dystonia”** in the Department of Defense’s Peer-Reviewed Medical Research Program. We ask that you reach out to your Senators no later than **December 13th**.
* Please consult the list below and see if one of the Senators from your state serves on the Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee.
* E-mail Matt Duquette, at [duquette@hmcw.org](mailto:duquette@hmcw.org) and let him know that you would like to reach out to your Senator in this regard. Please include the state in which you reside in your e-mail as Matt will use this information to identify your Senator and their appropriate staffer.
* Complete the letter below with your Dystonia story and send your completed letter to your Senator’s health staffer provided by Matt.

Dear Senator **[Senator’s Name]**,

Thank you for your leadership on patient care and public health issues. I write you today on behalf of the community of individuals affected by dystonia to thank you for ensuring that “dystonia” was included in the draft list of eligible conditions and ask that you work with your colleagues to ensure that “dystonia” is once again listed as a condition eligible for study through the Department of Defense Peer-Reviewed Medical Research Program (PRMRP) within the Committee Report accompanying the Senate’s FY 2025 Defense Appropriations Bill.

**[Tell your dystonia story in 1-2 paragraphs]**

Medical literature associates the onset of dystonia with traumatic injury, particularly traumatic head/brain injuries. Our men and women in uniform face a disproportionate risk of developing dystonia because of an injury sustained during their military service. Over recent years, the PRMRP has funded many dystonia research projects that have been crucial to increasing our scientific understanding of this condition. In the interest of further improving care for our dystonia-affected veterans, please once again support the inclusion of dystonia as a condition eligible for study through the PRMRP during the FY 2025 appropriations process. Our Washington representatives have already submitted this request through your official process.

I hope you will work with your colleagues in support of once again list dystonia in FY 2025 as a condition eligible for study through the annual list on the Committee Report accompanying the Senate’s FY25 bill.

On behalf of the dystonia community, thank you for your time and your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

**[Your Name]**

**[Your Address]**

**Senate Defense Appropriators**

Jon Tester, Montana, Chair Susan Collins, Maine, Vice Chair

Dick Durbin, Illinois Mitch McConnell, Kentucky

Chris Murphy, Connecticut Shelley Moore Capito, West Virginia

Chris Coons, Delaware Lisa Murkowski, Alaska

Patty Murray, Washington Lindsey Graham, South Carolina

Jack Reed, Rhode Island Jerry Moran, Kansas

Brian Schatz, Hawaii John Hoeven, North Dakota

Tammy Baldwin, Wisconsin John Boozman, Arkansas

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