



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS

March 24, 2026

The Honorable Tom Cole
U.S. House of Representatives
Chair
House Committee on Appropriations
2207 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
U.S. House of Representatives
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
2413 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ken Calvert
U.S. House of Representatives
Chair, Defense Subcommittee
House Committee on Appropriations
2205 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum
U.S. House of Representatives
Ranking Member, Defense Subcommittee
House Committee on Appropriations
2426 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole, Ranking Member DeLauro, Defense Subcommittee Chair Cole, and Defense Subcommittee Ranking Member McCollum:

On behalf of the American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS), and our more than 39,000 members across the United States, we respectfully urge the Committee to uphold its commitment to our nation's servicemembers by reinstating the \$30 million appropriation within the DoD Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP) for the Peer Reviewed Orthopaedic Research Program (PRORP) within conference negotiations for Fiscal Year (FY) 2027.

Congress established PRORP in FY 2009 with a clear mission: to fund "orthopedic and other trauma research, treatment and rehabilitation including regenerative medicine," with the goal of ensuring that America's warfighters who sustain orthopedic injuries have every opportunity for recovery and restoration of function. This investment directly supports military readiness, force strength, and our nation's ability to project power across the globe.

Orthopaedic injuries are among the most significant threats to combat effectiveness and long-term readiness. Nearly 78 percent of male and 85 percent of female Army personnel who separate from active service due to disability do so because of musculoskeletal injuries or conditions. These injuries not only reduce combat power and unit cohesion but also create long-term challenges for veterans and their families. In the civilian sector, musculoskeletal injuries account for 70 percent of lost workdays and \$176.1 billion in annual treatment costs—highlighting the scale of the problem and the need for solutions that keep Americans mission-ready both in and out of uniform.

PRORP is uniquely focused on advancing research that benefits the warfighter. The program funds high-risk, high-reward projects, translational studies that rapidly move solutions from the lab to the battlefield, and clinical trials that test promising interventions for real-world application. Today, PRORP supports research across the continuum of care—from acute battlefield injury management to reconstructive surgery,

rehabilitation, and the development of next-generation orthotic and prosthetic technologies that restore independence and operational capability.

Simply put, PRORP invests in the readiness and resilience of America's fighting force. It ensures that those who bear the greatest burden in defense of this nation receive the best possible chance at recovery and return to duty.

We appreciate your leadership and steadfast commitment to strengthening our military and protecting those who serve. We look forward to working with you to ensure this vital program is restored to its original funding level for FY 2027.

Sincerely,



Joel Mayerson, MD, FAAOS

AAOS Advocacy Council Chair

cc: Wilford Gibson, MD, FAAOS, AAOS President

Michael L. Parks, MD, FAAOS, AAOS First Vice President

Eliabeth G. Matzkin, MD, FAAOS, AAOS Second Vice President

Thomas E. Arend, Jr., Esq., CAE, AAOS Chief Executive Officer

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