

4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

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The Honorable Carl Levin Chairman Committee on Armed Services United States Senate Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This letter is in response to House Report 111–491, page 315, accompanying H.R. 5136, the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2011, which requested a report by March 31, 2011, on an evaluation on the potential role of emerging pain therapeutics, including topical analgesic formulations, in order to provide our men and women in uniform with effective means of pain management. The cost of the preparation of this report was approximately \$1,700. This issue falls under the purview of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and I have been asked to respond. Please accept my apology for the lateness of this report.

Section (sec.) 711 of NDAA for FY 2010 directed the Secretary of Defense to develop and implement a comprehensive policy on pain management by the Military Health System. This requirement was prompted by concerns that active duty Service members and veterans were not receiving proper management for acute and chronic pain, and they were suffering deleterious effects as a result. As required by sec. 711, the Secretary has developed a comprehensive plan and a long-term strategy for managing pain in our beneficiary population.

As part of this comprehensive plan for pain management, my subject matter experts have reviewed a variety of treatment modalities, including various types of pharmacologic therapy. To determine the most appropriate therapies to be employed for an individual's unique situation, practitioners must take an evidence-based approach. Department of Defense (DoD) and Veterans Health Administration staff have formed a Pain Management Work Group to examine the clinical evidence and to determine the most appropriate therapeutic modalities, both pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic, to treat our active duty and non-active duty beneficiaries for acute and chronic pain.

As new agents become commercially available, the group will similarly evaluate them based on the clinical evidence supporting their use. The group will conduct its evaluation of these pharmacologic agents, including topical analgesics, in coordination with the evidence-based processes used at the DoD Pharmacoeconomic Center in San Antonio, Texas. As required in sec. 711 of the NDAA for FY 2010, the Department will submit an annual report to congress to provide updates on all changes to pain management policy and an assessment of the effectiveness of the Department's policy in improving pain care for beneficiaries. In this report the Department will include any updates on the pharmacological management of pain, including topical therapeutic agents.

A similar letter is being sent to the other congressional defense committees. Thank you for your interest in the health and well-being of our Service members, veterans, and their families.

Sincerela

Jo Ann Rooney

Principal Deputy

cc:

The Honorable John McCain Ranking Member



4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

The Honorable Jim Webb Chairman Subcommittee on Personnel Committee on Armed Services United States Senate Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:



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Sincerely

Jo Ann Rooney
Principal Deputy

cc:

The Honorable Lindsey Graham Ranking Member

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The Honorable Howard P. "Buck" McKeon Chairman Committee on Armed Services U.S. House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515

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The Honorable Adam Smith Ranking Member

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The Honorable Joe Wilson
Chairman
Subcommittee on Military Personnel
Committee on Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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To Ann Rooney

cc:

The Honorable Susan A. Davis Ranking Member



4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye Chairman Committee on Appropriations United States Senate Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:



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Ann Rooney

CC:

The Honorable Thad Cochran Vice Chairman



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Subcommittee on Defense
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