



Department of Defense (DoD) Ovarian Cancer Research Program (OCRP) *Advancing Early Detection and Ovarian Cancer Treatment*

To support the DoD OCRP's efforts to increase understanding of ovarian cancer and improve treatment, the Ovarian Cancer National Alliance (OCNA) urges Congress to:

- Appropriate \$30 million for the program in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 DoD appropriations bill to allow it to maintain current research and expand innovative investigations into early detection and screening tools; and
- Maintain the structure of the OCRP as an independent, site-specific, dedicated research program.

Better early detection methods and treatments can improve ovarian cancer survival rates and the DoD OCRP is on the forefront of efforts to develop these tools and save women's lives.¹ Established in 1997, the OCRP has helped advance understanding and treatment of ovarian cancer through scientific discovery and innovative programs. Recent developments for the OCRP have included:

- Creating the DoD Ovarian Cancer Academy in 2009, which works to train the next generation of ovarian cancer researchers through the creation of a unique academy that will provide intensive mentoring, national networking and a peer group for junior faculty;
- Funding research such as that performed by Zhen Zhang, Ph.D., at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, who received an OCRP Idea Development Award of \$563,022 in FY2003. Zhang's research resulted in the OVA1 test, a blood test that can help physicians determine if a woman's pelvic mass is at risk for being malignant. OVA1 was approved by the FDA in September 2009; and
- Continuing to fund innovative, out-of-the-box ovarian cancer research. However, due to insufficient resources in FY 2010 the OCRP will only be able to fund approximately 30 proposals out of 350.

Ovarian Cancer Has a Devastating Impact on Women, Families and the Nation

Ovarian cancer will kill more than 15,000 women this year, and due to the lack of an effective early detection test, less than 20 percent of ovarian cancer patients are diagnosed early, when the disease is most treatable. Tragically, the overall death rate from ovarian cancer essentially has remained unchanged over the past forty years. With more than 21,000 new ovarian cancer diagnoses each year, more must be done to identify this deadly disease at its earliest and most treatable stage. The DoD OCRP plays a critical role in making progress toward better and faster diagnosis/detection, treatment and survival.

OCNA thanks the bipartisan group of 86 Members of the House of Representatives and the 26 Senators who have gone on record supporting these requests for FY 2011.

For more information about ovarian cancer and OCNA's public policy program, please contact Cara Tenenbaum, Vice President of Policy and External Affairs (ctenenbaum@ovariancancer.org, 202/331-1332, ext. 300).

¹ The OCRP is a peer-reviewed, competitively bid Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program and is not considered an earmark by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) or Congress. Specifically, the program does not meet the legal definition of an earmark as outlined in the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act of 2007, 2 USC 1601 [P.L. 110-81].