

STOMACH CANCER PRIORITIES



2026 CONGRESSIONAL REQUESTS

We thank Congress for the FY 2026 increases provided for the National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute and the Department of Defense's (DoD's) Peer-Reviewed Cancer Research Program (PRCRP). These increases are essential to protecting families, service members, and veterans impacted by stomach cancer.

For FY 2027, we respectfully request that you continue to provide sustainable and robust increases for cancer research funding and that you:

1. MAINTAIN STOMACH CANCER ELIGIBILITY FOR DoD PRCRP FUNDING

Why it Matters:

Stomach cancer is one of our nation's deadliest cancers and service members often face significantly increased risks due to hazardous exposures. The VA classifies stomach cancer as service-connected due to exposures like burn pits, radiation, and toxins. Military personnel overseas also face higher risks of developing an *Helicobacter pylori* (*H. pylori*) infection, which causes approximately 60% of U.S. stomach cancers. Congress has included stomach cancer in the PRCRP since FY15, but eligibility must be renewed annually. Maintaining eligibility ensures continued progress in prevention, early detection, and treatment for service members, veterans, and American families.

What We Need You to Do:

Sign the letter to the Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense to maintain stomach cancer eligibility in the PRCRP for FY 2027

- **Senate:** contact Jade_Rowland@hirono.senate.gov (Sen. Mazie Hirono)
- **House:** contact Michael.MacHarg@mail.house.gov (Rep. Joe Wilson) or Seamus.McKeon@mail.house.gov (Rep. Jimmy Panetta)

2. INCLUDE FY27 NDAA LANGUAGE FOR A DOD COST & FEASIBILITY STUDY ON *H. PYLORI* TESTING FOR AT-RISK U.S. SERVICE MEMBERS

Why it Matters:

An estimated 25% of veterans are infected with *H. pylori*, which not only causes stomach cancers, but also ulcers, lymphoma, and chronic gastritis. Service members deployed overseas face elevated risk of *H. pylori* infection due to serving in high-prevalence regions and crowded living conditions. The good news: testing and antibiotics significantly reduce the risk of disease. A DoD-led cost and feasibility study is a prudent, prevention-focused first step to protect force readiness, save lives, and reduce long-term health care costs for service members and veterans.

What We Need You to Do:

Please include the language on the reverse in your FY27 NDAA requests and let us know if your office submits it so we may recognize your support. For questions, contact Megan Gordon Don at mgdon@mgdstrategies.com.

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National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for FY 2027

REPORT ON PLAN FOR TESTING FOR HELICOBACTER PYLORI FOR CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) IN GENERAL. Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report containing a plan, cost estimate, and feasibility study for implementing testing for *helicobacter pylori* (commonly known as “*H. pylori*”).

- (1) during accession physicals for the Armed Forces; and
- (2) for members of the Armed Forces
 - (A) deployed to countries with high rates of *H. pylori*; or
 - (B) subjected to crowded living conditions, such as ship berthing.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include an estimate of costs for implementing a program for conducting testing described in subsection (a), which shall include testing for *H. pylori* using breath and stool-based methods.

(c) CONSIDERATION OF EXPERTISE.— In preparing the report required under subsection (a), the Secretary may, and is encouraged to, seek the input and expertise of physician experts, including gastroenterologists who have expertise in:

- (1) the field of *H. pylori*;
- (2) the gastrointestinal diseases and disorders that arise from *H. pylori*; or
- (3) the screening and testing mechanisms for those diseases and disorders.