FY2008 Defense Appropriations and Authorization Bills Address Combat-related Eye Injuries, Include Vision Research Funding Opportunities

DOD/PRMRP:
The FY2008 Defense Appropriations bill (HR 3222) listed “eye and vision research” as eligible for the pool of $50 million of peer-reviewed funding available under the DOD’s Peer Reviewed Medical Research Program (PRMRP) within the more-expansive Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP). On February 13, DOD released a preliminary notice on its Web site stating that, by April 2008, it would issue an announcement of the award mechanisms available to the 21 areas of eligible research, including eye and vision research. The award mechanisms include a combination of basic research, through Investigator-initiated Research Awards, and translational research, through Translational Research Awards, Advanced Technology/Therapeutic Development Awards, and Clinical Trial Awards. NAEVR will monitor the Web site and report to its networks on the release of the final announcement and all applicable deadlines. Contact NAEVR's David Epstein at depstein@eyeresearch.org to be added to NAEVR's update list.

Military Eye Trauma:
The FY2008 Defense Authorization bill (HR 4986) included provisions of the Military Eye Trauma Treatment Act (HR 3558), which create a Center of Excellence within the DOD that would collaborate with the VA on a comprehensive approach to the prevention, diagnosis, mitigation, treatment, and rehabilitation of eye injuries and trauma, including a Military Eye Injury Registry to track the diagnosis and treatment of each significant eye injury incurred by a member of the armed forces while on active duty.

Armed Forces Institute of Pathology:
HR 4986 retained key functions of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (AFIP), including its education, consultation, and research services, as part of a newly created Joint Pathology Center located at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. The AFIP, which was set to be abolished by the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission, houses a world-renowned Tissue Repository and provides educational training programs in ophthalmic pathology.

Full details about the stories on these pages appear in the NAEVR Web site Advocacy Center’s sections on NIH/NEI Appropriations and Defense-related Vision Research.