THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

1200 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1200

HEALTH AFFAIRS

AUG 23 2006

The Honorable John W. Warner
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510-6050

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This letter is in response to the Department of Defense Appropriations Act Conference Report 109-359 that requests the Department to report on the pilot projects to be incorporated with the TRICARE Prime benefit; measures that will be taken by the military services to expedite tobacco use prevention and cessation programs available to all military personnel; a plan that the Secretary of Defense determines appropriate for improving the out of pocket costs to military personnel for smoking cessation products and a plan for continuing the "Healthy Choices for Life" demonstration program to the Defense Committees no later than March 1, 2006.

The Department welcomes the opportunity to report on this initiative. The tobacco cessation demonstration project is one of three "Healthy Choices for Life" initiatives in the TRICARE Management Activity's Office of the Chief Medical Officer. The program has recently received the necessary institutional review board approvals to begin study activities. As a result of the many complexities of this program, we anticipate the data required to respond to this inquiry will be available the beginning of FY2007. The Department anticipates that a final report will be made available to Congress in February 2007.

Thank you for your continued support of the Military Health System.

Sincerely,

William Winkenwerder, Jr., MD

cc:
Senator Carl Levin