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17th Surgeon General of the United States (2002-2006)

November 14, 2011

CAPT (Ret.) Frank Butler
Chairman
Tactical Combat Casualty Care Committee
Department of Defense Health Board

Dear Frank and Committee on Tactical Combat Casualty Care Colleagues:

It is with great regret that I am unable to be with you tonight due to a long standing commitment.

Tonight is not only an opportunity for us to celebrate the extraordinary advances in combat casualty care that the Committee on Tactical Combat Casualty Care has led, but also a chance for our warriors and a grateful nation to appreciate the unwavering selfless service and immense contributions of the CoTCCC.

Historically our nation's health and emergency care infrastructure improves significantly after every war. Today we have the finest trauma and emergency medical systems in the world, largely due to the innovative best practices translated from the battlefields to our communities. However, in the past this translation process of evolving scientific intellectual property has sometimes taken decades before it has benefitted our communities. Through the dedication, commitment, professionalism and perseverance of the CoTCCC, you have acted as the scientific vetting agent and accelerator of best practices "downrange" and back to CONUS.

The result has been a decrease in the time it takes to incorporate best practices, resulting in an unprecedented reduction in morbidity and mortality for our warriors downrange. And now, once again, our nation and the world will benefit from our lessons learned but this time in a much shorter pipeline from field experience to common utilization.

I would venture to say that the CoTCCC has been one of the greatest contributions to combat casualty care in history.

Thank you all for your extraordinary service and contributions. I am proud to know and work with all of you.

Most Sincerely,

Richard Carmona, M.D., M.P.H., FACS
17th Surgeon General of the United States
Vice President, Defense Health Board

cc: Hon. Jonathan Woodson, ASDHA
Nancy Dickey, President, DHB
GEN (Ret.) Dick Myers, Vice President, DHB