

## WEST VIRGINIA'S 2016 STATE POLICY PLATFORM

*More than 36,000 residents, over the age of 65, are living with Alzheimer's disease or other dementias. This number is projected to grow to 44,000 in West Virginia by the year 2025. These individuals are cared for by more than 108,000 informal caregivers, who provide an estimated \$1.5 billion in unpaid care.*

Given the sweeping economic, social, and psychological impact Alzheimer's disease has on West Virginia, the state needs a proactive response to this issue. The Alzheimer's Association will focus on the following policy priorities in 2016:

### Balance Care Options

Create a balanced system of care options to support a person-centered approach to care for individuals with Alzheimer's and dementia that meets the varying challenges of the continuum of the disease and maximizes available resources.

- Expand access to adult day health services in West Virginia to include a hybrid social/medical model and ensure adult day health is a reimbursable service. Currently, West Virginia is the only state in the nation without a reimbursable form of adult day health.
- Maintain state funding for the Family Alzheimer's In-Home Respite (FAIR) program. This critical program offered in every county provides respite to family caregivers and delivers individualized attention and activities for the person with Alzheimer's. FAIR services help people with Alzheimer's remain at home longer and can postpone the need for other costlier state services such as Medicaid.
- Expand access to home and community-based care options to meet the unique and diverse needs of individuals with Alzheimer's disease and dementia.
- Continue support for the Alzheimer's Association's 24/7 Helpline (800.272.3900). The 24/7 Helpline provides West Virginians with access to caregiver support, disease information, and referral services.

### Expand Safety Efforts

Six out of every ten individuals with Alzheimer's or dementia will wander. West Virginia's current Silver Alert program provides the capacity for immediate response to a wandering incident. By adopting national best practices, West Virginia's Silver Alert program can continue to not only be a vital resource, but lead the nation in efficacy.

- A comprehensive Silver Alert program should be specifically tailored to individuals with Alzheimer's or other dementias.
- A comprehensive Silver Alert program should collect data and regularly evaluate program operations.

### Renew Neighborhood Investment Program

The Neighborhood Investment Program (NIP) allows non-profits to attract donors by offering businesses and individuals a state tax credit. Businesses and individuals who contribute to participating organizations are eligible to receive up to 50 percent of the contributed amount in the form of a West Virginia state tax credit. The Alzheimer's Association supports the renewal of the Neighborhood Investment Program \$3 million annual appropriation for another five years and a

\$500,000 increase in the program's state fiscal year 2019 budget to bring the program's annual appropriation to \$3.5 million. This program helps:

- Increase private giving from low and middle income households by helping to leverage local investment thus diversifying opportunities.
  - Impact local and statewide communities. Because of our involvement with NIP, the Alzheimer's Association has secured more than \$20,000 in the last five years to serve families who need support.
  - With ongoing recovery by non-profits from the "Great Recession." In 2015, the NIP program leveraged nearly \$7 million in private gifts: a 225 percent return on the state's investment.
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**For more information on these issues, please contact:**

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**Alzheimer's Association West Virginia Chapter**

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Contact the Alzheimer's Association's toll-free **Helpline at 800.272.3900** for emotional support, local resources, and information about Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

We're here to help you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

*The mission of the Alzheimer's Association is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health.*

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