

The Honorable Maxine Waters
U.S. House of Representatives
2221 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

September 25, 2013

Dear Representative Waters,

On behalf of the Alzheimer's Association®, thank you for your continued leadership on issues of importance to Americans with Alzheimer's disease and their caregivers. The Alzheimer's Association proudly supports your bill, H.R. 2975, the *Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Act*, which will improve training and supportive services for those who are providing care for individuals with Alzheimer's disease.

The Alzheimer's Association is the world's leading voluntary health organization on Alzheimer's care, support and research. As you know, today there are more than 5 million Americans living with Alzheimer's disease, which is the sixth leading cause of death and the only cause of death in the top 10 without a way to prevent, cure or even slow its progression. Alzheimer's disease is the most costly disease in the United States and is set to increase like no other. In 2013, the cost of caring for those with Alzheimer's disease will reach \$203 billion, and is expected to grow to \$1.2 trillion by 2050. Without significant breakthroughs in the development of treatments or a cure, it is projected that as many as 16 million Americans will have Alzheimer's by 2050.

Unfortunately, the burden of caring for individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias extends to millions of Americans caring for those with the disease. In 2012, more than 15 million unpaid caregivers provided over 17 billion hours of care valued at more than \$216 billion. Alzheimer's caregivers also report higher levels of stress, depression and worse health outcomes when compared to others who are providing care to individuals without dementia. As a result, Alzheimer's caregivers incurred \$9.1 billion in additional health costs last year. While unpaid caregivers can benefit from home- and community-based services such as respite care, adult day centers and home care, the lack of viable financing options means many must pay out-of-pocket.

The *Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Act* will provide grants to public and non-profit organizations to expand and improve training and support services for families and caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer's disease. This important legislation recognizes the need for family caregivers to receive the training and support necessary to provide quality care for their loved ones. The bill ensures that grantees provide public outreach on the services they offer under this program and that grantees provide services in a culturally appropriate manner. It also requires that the Secretary of Health and Human Services coordinate with the Office of Minority Health to ensure that women, minorities and medically underserved communities benefit from the program. These important provisions are consistent with the *National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease*, which calls for enhancing public outreach about Alzheimer's disease

resources and services as well as the distribution of culturally-sensitive materials to individuals and families facing Alzheimer's disease.

The Alzheimer's Association appreciates your continued leadership on behalf of all Americans living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. If you have any questions about this or any other legislation, please contact Robert Kramer, Associate Director of Federal Affairs at RKramer@alz.org or by phone at 202.638.8676.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rachel M. Conant". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rachel Conant
Director, Federal Affairs