



June 9, 2015

The Honorable Mark Warner  
U.S. Senate  
475 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Johnny Isakson  
U.S. Senate  
131 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Warner and Senator Isakson,

On behalf of the Alzheimer's Association<sup>®</sup>, thank you for your leadership on issues important to Americans with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, as well as their families and caregivers. The Alzheimer's Association proudly supports your legislation, the Care Planning Act of 2015. We look forward to working with you in a bipartisan fashion to ensure that Medicare beneficiaries with life-threatening conditions, including Alzheimer's disease, have the opportunity to receive patient-and-family-centered planning services.

The Alzheimer's Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support and research. As you know, more than 5 million Americans are currently living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. Alzheimer's disease was recently identified by the *New England Journal of Medicine* as the costliest disease in the United States. It is estimated that in 2015, Medicare will spend nearly \$113 billion to treat beneficiaries with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, or about 1 out-of-every 5 dollars spent by the program. Medicare beneficiaries with Alzheimer's or dementia also account for three times as many hospital stays as beneficiaries who do not have Alzheimer's or another dementia. These hospitalizations often result from complications to other conditions that are caused or exacerbated by the presence of Alzheimer's or dementia, making care planning a critical piece of the care process for this population. By 2050, the number of people in the United States with Alzheimer's disease may be as high as 16 million, representing an annual cost to the nation of over \$1.1 trillion. Medicare's share of this spending will be nearly \$600 billion.

At its heart, the Care Planning Act will provide Medicare beneficiaries facing serious or life-threatening conditions (including Alzheimer's disease) with critical planning services that take into account the beneficiary's goals, values and preferences. Care planning for Alzheimer's disease and dementia improves the quality of medical care that an individual receives and results in a higher quality of life. The type of person-and-family-centered planning envisioned by the Care Planning Act is also crucial to informing the health care and legal systems of a person's wishes should they be unable to express them in the future. In addition, the Care Planning Act would provide training for the beneficiary's family and/or caregivers on implementing the care plan. This type of family/caregiver support is especially important to improving care for beneficiaries with Alzheimer's disease or dementia.

The Alzheimer's Association appreciates your leadership on this important issue, and we look forward to continuing to work with you and your colleagues to improve care and support for individuals and families affected by Alzheimer's disease. If you have any questions, please contact Rachel Conant, Director of Federal Affairs, at [rconant@alz.org](mailto:rconant@alz.org) or at 202-638-7121.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Egge".

Robert Egge  
Executive Vice President  
Alzheimer's Association