



The Honorable Susan Collins
United States Senate
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
United States Senate
141 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

May 21, 2024

Dear Senators Collins and Baldwin:

On behalf of the Alzheimer's Association and the Alzheimer's Impact Movement (AIM), including our nationwide network of advocates, thank you for your continued leadership on issues and legislation important to Americans living with Alzheimer's and other dementias and to their caregivers. We write to express our support for the bipartisan Lifespan Respite Care Reauthorization Act (S.4325), which would reauthorize and extend the Lifespan Respite Care Program that assists family caregivers in accessing affordable and high-quality respite care.

The burden of Alzheimer's on individuals and families continues to grow. Today, nearly 7 million Americans aged 65 and older are living with Alzheimer's dementia, and by mid-century, this number is expected to nearly double. Total payments for all individuals living with this disease are estimated to reach \$360 billion in 2024 (not including unpaid caregiving). Medicare and Medicaid are expected to cover \$231 billion, or 64 percent, of the total health care and long-term care payments for people with Alzheimer's or other dementia. Total payments for health care costs, including hospice care, for people with Alzheimer's and other dementia are projected to increase to nearly \$1.1 trillion by 2050. These mounting costs threaten to bankrupt families, businesses, and our health care system. Unfortunately, our work is only growing more urgent.

Eighty-three percent of the help provided to older adults in the United States comes from family members, friends, or other unpaid caregivers. Compared with caregivers of people without dementia, caregivers of those with dementia indicate more substantial emotional, financial, and physical difficulties. The Lifespan Respite Care Program plays a crucial role in supporting caregivers and enhancing the overall quality of life for individuals with chronic conditions or disabilities, such as Alzheimer's or other dementia. By providing funding opportunities to states and programs, these programs offer caregivers a temporary break from the heavy physical, mental, and financial tolls associated with caregiving that, all too often, go unnoticed. This can, in turn, improve the quality of life for both caregivers and individuals living with chronic illness. Reauthorizing this program through the Lifespan Respite Care Reauthorization Act will maintain a public health infrastructure that has been shown to help alleviate caregiver burden and further enhance care quality for individuals with chronic illness.

The Alzheimer's Association and AIM deeply appreciate your continued leadership on behalf of all Americans living with Alzheimer's and other dementia, and we look forward to working with you to advance this important bipartisan bill. If you have any questions about this or any other legislation, please contact Jen Pollack, Director of Access Policy, at jpollack@alz-aim.org or at 202.638.8676.

Sincerely,

Rachel M. Conant

Rachel Conant

Executive Director, Alzheimer's Impact Movement

Vice President, Federal Affairs, Alzheimer's Association