



The Honorable Susan Collins
Chairman
Senate Committee on Aging
G-31 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington D.C. 20510

The Honorable Bob Casey
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Aging
628 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington D.C. 20510

January 31, 2019

Dear Chairwoman Collins and Ranking Member Casey:

On behalf of the Alzheimer's Association and the Alzheimer's Impact Movement (AIM), including our nationwide networks 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. The Alzheimer's Association and AIM are pleased to support the *Geriatrics Workforce Improvement Act*.

More than 5 million Americans are living with Alzheimer's and, without significant action, nearly 14 million Americans will have Alzheimer's by 2050. Today, another person develops the disease every 65 seconds; by 2050, someone in the United States will develop the disease every 33 seconds. This explosive growth will cause Alzheimer's costs to increase from an estimated \$277 billion in 2018 to \$1.1 trillion in 2050 (in 2018 dollars). These mounting costs threaten to bankrupt families, businesses and our health care system. Unfortunately, our work is only growing more urgent.

The *Geriatrics Workforce Improvement Act* would develop a workforce capable of providing complex, high-quality care that improves health outcomes and reduces costs for a diverse and growing aging population. It would reauthorize the Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program (GWEP), and reinstate the Geriatrics Academic Career Awards (GACAs) Program, a previously funded program for developing clinician-educators, two critical objectives to ensure communities across the nation have access to health professionals and other critical supports, improving care for all of us as we age. By supporting the GWEP and GACAs the *Geriatrics Workforce Improvement Act* would, foster education and engagement with family caregivers by training providers who can assess and address care needs and preferences, reach underserved and rural communities by ensuring clinician-educators are prepared to train the geriatrics workforce of today and tomorrow, and improve the quality of care delivered to older adults by providing education to families and caregivers on critical care challenges.

The Alzheimer's Association and AIM deeply appreciate your continued leadership on behalf of all Americans living with Alzheimer's and other dementias. 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 and other dementias. If you have any questions about this or any other legislation, please contact Rachel Conant, Senior Director of Federal Affairs, at rconant@alz-aim.org or at 202.638.7121.

Sincerely,

Robert Egge
Chief Public Policy Officer
Executive Vice President, Government Affairs
Alzheimer's Association

1212 New York Avenue NW | Suite 800 | Washington, D.C. 20005