**117th Congress: Join the bipartisan Congressional Task Force on Alzheimer’s Disease**

**Letter to the Editor Talking Points**

*The following talking points can be used to help you write a personal and compelling letter to the editor for placement in your local paper. As always, please coordinate your efforts with your local Alzheimer’s Association chapter to avoid duplication, and be sure to include “Alzheimer’s Association” in your final version.*

*Compelling Opening Suggested TPs (choose or create your own)*

* Today, more than 5 million Americans are currently living with Alzheimer’s – a number expected to nearly triple by 2050, including [NUMBER] in [STATE], according to the Alzheimer’s Association.
* According to the Alzheimer’s Association, more than 16 million Americans provide unpaid care for people with Alzheimer's or other dementias.
* Despite the sobering statistics, I feel a great deal of hope knowing the fight against Alzheimer’s has been a source of unity among Democrats and Republicans.
* As the 117th Congress begins its session, [SENATOR NAME/REP. NAME] has the opportunity to help families like mine.

*Personal Story TPs (share your story, below are some questions to get you started)*

* Why are you an advocate?
* How has Alzheimer’s impacted you?

*Pivot to Call-to-Action*

* Thankfully, **[MEMBER]** can play an important role in addressing this critical issue.
* Since 1999, the bipartisan Congressional Task Force on Alzheimer’s Disease, has been instrumental in helping advance policies to improve research, care and support.

*Ending Call to Action TPs*

* Please join me in encouraging **[MEMBER]** to lead in the fight to end Alzheimer’s by joining the bipartisan Congressional Task Force on Alzheimer’s Disease.

**Tips for Writing Printable Letters to the Editor**

*To ask Congressional leaders to join the bipartisan Congressional Task Force on Alzheimer’s Disease, we’re suggesting you write and submit a LTE to your local paper. As always, please coordinate your efforts with your local chapter to avoid duplication. Here are tips for writing a LTE that will be published:*

**1. Know the rules.** Do your homework about how to submit a letter and what information you need to include in order to get printed. Usually this information is printed on the opinion page of the newspaper; or you can find the information on the newspaper’s website. Pay attention to word count submission requirements and instructions on the best way to submit the document.

**2. Make it relevant.** Following these tips, we have provided LTE message points and blocks of suggested text for your use. Tailor and modify them with your personal details so that it becomes a piece reflecting your authentic voice, while always staying consistent with Alzheimer’s Association messaging.

**3. Keep it brief.** Most letters to the editor should be 200 words or less. Any longer and it will most likely not get printed.

**4. Highlight local statistics.** Include relevant local and/or state information — the number of people with Alzheimer’s in your state, the projected number of individuals age 65 or older with Alzheimer’s in your state, mortality data, costs related to caregiving in your state, etc. This information localizes the impact and can increase interest in publishing the letter. Alzheimer’s-related information from your state can be found in the Alzheimer’s Association Facts and Figures report alz.org/facts.

**5. Be clear.** While you may be an expert on this issue, not everyone knows about it. Avoid jargon or acronyms that are not common. Have someone proofread the LTE before you send it.

**6. Use language cues to emphasize your point.** For instance, preface your major conclusion with “The important thing is…”

**7. Don’t overlook neighborhood weeklies, smaller newspapers and local websites and blogs.** These media outlets are intensely important in the area that they’re published and they also may have more room for letters than a bigger publication.

**8. Include a call-to-action or solution.** Include information about what people can do to help, for example: “Visit alz.org to learn more about this year’s Alzheimer’s Association Facts and Figures report,” or “Visit alz.org and alzimpact.org to get involved with the fight against Alzheimer’s.”

**9. Be passionate, but not poisonous.** We appreciate your passion about the issue (and so will the editors), but we also implore you to be respectful in your commentary.

**10. Consider the online editorial page.** Many newspapers are moving to just online versions or have an extended letters section in their online versions. Research your local news media outlets to see if there is a way to be included in these sections as well.