



The Honorable Bob Casey
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Pat Toomey
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

March 9, 2021

Dear Senators Casey and Toomey:

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 dementia, and to their caregivers. The Alzheimer's Association and AIM write today in strong support of the bipartisan Nursing Home Reform Modernization Act, which would enhance the quality of care and transparency for nursing home residents and their families.

An estimated 6.2 million Americans age 65 and older are living with Alzheimer's dementia in 2021. Total payments for all individuals with Alzheimer's or other dementias are estimated at \$355 billion (not including unpaid caregiving) in 2021. Medicare and Medicaid are expected to cover \$239 billion or 67% of the total health care and long-term care payments for people with Alzheimer's or other dementias. Total payments for health care, long-term care and hospice care for people with Alzheimer's and other dementias are projected to increase to more than \$1.1 trillion in 2050. These mounting costs threaten to bankrupt families, businesses and our health care system. Unfortunately, our work is only growing more urgent.

At age 80, approximately 75 percent of people with Alzheimer's dementia live in a nursing home compared with only 4 percent of the general population at age 80. In all, an estimated two-thirds of those who die of dementia do so in nursing homes, compared with 20 percent of people with cancer and 28 percent of people dying from all other conditions. It is critical that all residents of nursing homes, including those in skilled nursing facilities and Medicaid nursing facilities, receive consistent, high quality care, especially as people can live for many years in these settings.

The Nursing Home Reform Modernization Act would help ensure high-quality care by establishing an Advisory Council on Skilled Nursing Facility Rankings under Medicare and Nursing Facility Rankings under Medicaid at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). This new Advisory Council would provide HHS with recommendations on how to rank high-rated and low-rated facilities, with information on those rankings posted publicly to the Nursing Home Compare website. Importantly, the Special Focus Facility Program would transition to the low-rated facility program and Quality Improvement Organizations would work with those low-rated facilities to improve their quality of care through on-site consultation and educational programming. When choosing a facility for themselves or their loved ones, families deserve to have all the information available in a clear, easily digestible way. We appreciate that this bipartisan bill also directs HHS to utilize focus groups and consumer testing to ensure these ratings are easily understood by older adults, individuals with disabilities and family caregivers.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Egge', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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