

The Honorable Brett Guthrie  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2434 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Paul Tonko  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2463 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chris Smith  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2373 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Maxine Waters  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2221 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

November 6, 2017

Dear Representatives Guthrie, Tonko, Smith and Waters:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, thank you for your leadership on the important public health issues facing our nation, including the urgent issue of Americans with Alzheimer's and other dementias. We are pleased to support the bipartisan Building Our Largest Dementia (BOLD) Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Act, which would create an Alzheimer's public health infrastructure across the country to implement effective interventions focused on public health issues such as increasing early detection and diagnosis, reducing risk and preventing avoidable hospitalizations.

Former Surgeon General and Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Dr. David Satcher recently said, "Alzheimer's is the most under-recognized threat to public health in the 21<sup>st</sup> century." More than 5 million Americans are currently living with Alzheimer's and, without significant action, as many as 16 million Americans will have Alzheimer's by 2050. Today, another person develops the disease every 66 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 \$259 billion in 2017 to \$1.1 trillion in 2050 (in 2017 dollars). These mounting costs threaten to bankrupt families, businesses and our health care system.

Public health plays an important role in protecting the health and well-being of Americans, including promoting cognitive function and reducing the risk of cognitive decline. Investing in a nationwide Alzheimer's public health response will help create population-level change, achieve a higher quality of life for those living with the disease and their caregivers, and reduce associated costs. The BOLD Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Act would provide this crucial investment by establishing Alzheimer's centers of excellence across the country and funding state, local and tribal public health departments to increase early detection and diagnosis, reduce risk, prevent avoidable hospitalizations, reduce health disparities, support the needs of caregivers and support care planning for people living with the disease. These important public health actions allow individuals with Alzheimer's to live in their homes longer and delay costly institutionalized care.

The BOLD Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Act would also increase the collection, analysis and timely reporting of data. This data is critical to identifying opportunities for public health interventions, helping stakeholders track progress in the public health response, and enabling state and federal policymakers to make informed decisions when developing plans and policies. Finally, the bill would also strengthen nationwide implementation of the CDC's *Public Health Road Map*, which includes strategic action items for state and local public health departments and their partners to promote cognitive functioning, address cognitive impairment and help meet the needs of care partners.

We deeply appreciate your leadership on behalf of the public health community and all American's living with Alzheimer's and other dementias. We look forward to working with you to advance this important bipartisan bill.

Sincerely,

Alzheimer's Association

Alzheimer's Impact Movement

Association of State and Territorial Health Officials

Caregiver Action Network

Caregiver Voices United

Georgia Department of Public Health Commissioner, Dr. Patrick O'Neal

LeadingAge

Minnesota Department of Health Commissioner, Jan Malcolm

Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services Director, Sheila Hogan

National Association of Chronic Disease Directors

National Association of Counties

National Association of County and City Health Officials

National Network of Public Health Institutes

Oregon Health Authority Public Health Director, Lillian Shirley

Washington State Department of Health

*\*Signatures current as of April 6, 2018*