



The Honorable Jacky Rosen
The United States Senate
713 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

August 11, 2022

Dear Senator Rosen:

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 to support the **Supporting our Seniors Act**, which would establish a bipartisan national advisory commission on long-term care services and supports (LTSS), among other priorities.

The burden of Alzheimer's on individuals and families continues to grow. Today, more than 6 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 at \$321 billion (not including unpaid caregiving). Medicare and Medicaid are expected to cover \$206 billion, or 64 percent, of the total health care and long-term care payments for people with Alzheimer's or other dementias. Total payments for health care costs, including hospice care, for people with Alzheimer's and other dementias are projected to increase to nearly \$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.

People aged 65 and older survive an average of four to eight years after a diagnosis of Alzheimer's, and some live as long as 20 years. During that period, individuals will spend an average of 40 percent of this time in dementia's most severe stage and much of it in a nursing home. In 2020, an individual's health care and long-term care payments from all sources for Medicare beneficiaries with Alzheimer's or other dementias were over three times as great as payments for other Medicare beneficiaries in the same age group, averaging \$52,481 per person for those with dementia compared with \$14,976 per person for those without dementia. The cost and accessibility of high quality LTSS are still major hurdles for many individuals living with Alzheimer's and dementia, and must be addressed through a comprehensive policy lens.

In 2013, Congress established the Commission on Long Term Care, with the intent to develop a plan to establish a comprehensive health care system focused on the availability of LTSS for individuals in need of such services and supports, including elderly individuals, individuals with substantial cognitive or functional limitations, and others who might utilize these services. The Commission published a final report to Congress before it was decommissioned in 2013, with one recommendation being the creation of a national advisory commission to expand upon the findings in the report.

The Supporting our Seniors Act would create a permanent Commission focused on creating annual policy recommendations for LTSS and critical aspects of long-term care coverage for non-Medicaid eligible populations, such as considerations for aging in place, financing options for long-term care for low and middle income individuals, caregiver supports and workforce stability, access to comprehensive care, coordination of medical and personal care needs, access to palliative care, the affordability of services, and considerations for children and non-senior adults with disabilities to access LTSS. Sharing policy recommendations in these areas with Congress on an annual basis would benefit those living with Alzheimer's and other dementia, as well as provide federal policy makers with an actionable plan to increase access to crucial LTSS.

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 'RE', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert Egge
Chief Public Policy Officer, Alzheimer's Association
Executive Director, Alzheimer's Impact Movement