SENATE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ENCOURAGES NIH TO SUBMIT A PROFESSIONAL JUDGMENT BUDGET TO ADDRESS RESEARCH FUNDING FOR THE ALZHEIMER’S CRISIS

- Alzheimer’s Association Statement –

WASHINGTON, D.C., JULY 28, 2014 – In June, the U.S. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies allocated an additional $100 million in its fiscal year 2015 funding bill for Alzheimer’s research. In the report recently released, the Subcommittee also called for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to submit a Professional Judgment Budget for Alzheimer’s disease research and a report that outlines research conducted on Alzheimer’s disease relative to milestones established under the National Plan to Address Alzheimer’s Disease.

“The Alzheimer’s Association commends Chairman Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Ranking Member Jerry Moran (R-KS) for their commitment to ensuring a strong implementation of the country’s first-ever National Alzheimer’s Plan,” said Robert Egge, Vice President of Public Policy at the Alzheimer’s Association. “To meet its goal of preventing and effectively treating Alzheimer’s disease by 2025, we must ensure that Congress is equipped with the best possible information to set funding priorities.”

This recommendation echoes the efforts of the bipartisan Alzheimer’s Accountability Act (H.R. 4351/S. 2192) introduced in April. The Alzheimer’s Accountability Act authorizes the NIH to submit a Professional Judgment Budget to Congress justifying funding for critical Alzheimer’s research. This Professional Judgment Budget will be formulated by the experts at the NIH to reflect the resources needed to accomplish the goals of the National Alzheimer’s Plan in each fiscal year leading up to 2025. It will reflect the state of Alzheimer’s research and call out the most promising opportunities according to leading scientists. The Alzheimer’s Association commends Reps. Brett
Guthrie (R-KY) and Paul Tonko (D-NY) and Sens. Edward Markey (D-Mass.) and Mike Crapo (R-ID) for their leadership in introducing this important legislation.

“We’ve seen other diseases benefit from this type of direct access between scientists and Congress. We must follow this strategic path if we hope to achieve the goals of the National Alzheimer’s Plan,” said Egge.

There are currently more than 5 million Americans living with Alzheimer’s disease and that number is poised to grow to as many as 16 million by 2050, according the Alzheimer’s Association 2014 Alzheimer’s Disease Facts & Figures report. In addition to the human toll of the disease, care for Alzheimer’s, the country’s most expensive condition, costs the nation $214 billion annually with projections to reach $1.2 trillion by 2050. Yet for every $26,500 Medicare and Medicaid spend on caring for individuals with Alzheimer’s, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) spends only $100 on Alzheimer’s research.

The Alzheimer’s Association encourages all parties – Senate, House of Representatives and Obama Administration – to do everything possible to ensure that a final funding bill for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies makes Alzheimer’s a national priority. For more information on Alzheimer’s disease and available resources, visit the Alzheimer’s Association at alz.org.

Alzheimer's Association
The Alzheimer's Association is the world’s leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support and research. Our mission is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's. For more information, visit www.alz.org.

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