

THE BRAINS BEHIND SAVING YOURS.™

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Erin Heintz, 202.638.7040; eheintz@alz.org

Alzheimer's Association Media Line, 312.335.4078, media@alz.org

EFFORTS OF ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION ADVOCATES INCORPORATED IN FUNDING BILL

Advocates Now Call on Congress and White House to Ensure Enactment of Critical Alzheimer's Legislation in the Bill

- Alzheimer's Association Statement -

Washington, D.C., December 9, 2014 – As the largest Alzheimer's advocacy organization in the world, the Alzheimer's Association commends Congress for addressing Alzheimer's disease in the fiscal year 2015 funding bill released today. By incorporating the Alzheimer's Accountability Act (H.R. 4351/S. 2192), which was shepherded by the Alzheimer's Association, Congress has made a long-term commitment to elevating research funding to the necessary levels. This bill will help ensure that future Congressional Alzheimer's funding decisions will be guided by the professional judgment of National Institutes of Health (NIH) scientists as they race toward the *National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease's* goal to prevent and effectively treat Alzheimer's by 2025.

"After thousands of congressional meetings with Alzheimer's Association grassroots advocates and staff in the past 18 months, Congress has committed to a new strategic approach to addressing Alzheimer's funding moving forward," said Harry Johns, president and CEO of the Alzheimer's Association. "We must hear from and enable the leading minds in science if we hope to adequately fund Alzheimer's research and accomplish the primary goal of the National Alzheimer's Plan."

Introduced in April, the Alzheimer's Accountability Act calls for the NIH to submit a Professional Judgment Budget for Alzheimer's disease research each year, as well as a report that outlines research conducted on Alzheimer's disease relative to milestones established under the National Alzheimer's Plan. This annually prepared 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.

Additionally, the funding bill includes a \$25 million increase for Alzheimer's research, which comes on the heels of an unprecedented \$122 million increase for Alzheimer's research, education, outreach and caregiver support in fiscal year 2014. Together, these increases would bring annual federal funding for Alzheimer's research to \$591 million. However, scientists have stated accomplishing the goal of the National Alzheimer's Plan – and one day having our first Alzheimer's survivor – will require a commitment of at least \$2 billion a year.

There are currently more than 5 million Americans living with Alzheimer's disease at a cost to the nation of \$214 billion a year, according to the Alzheimer's Association 2014 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures report. Because advancing age is the greatest risk factor for Alzheimer's and Americans are living longer than ever before, those numbers are projected to soar to as many as 16 million by 2050, costing the nation \$20 trillion over the next 40 years.

A new study from a team of economists at the University of Southern California (USC)¹ reveals that Alzheimer's costs to the nation will grow fivefold in years to come. These findings come on the heels of last year's *New England Journal of Medicine*² study that confirmed Alzheimer's is already the most expensive condition in America. Yet, for every \$26,500 the government spends on Alzheimer's care, it only invests \$100 in research for Alzheimer's – a disease that currently has no way to prevent, stop or even slow its fatal progression.

"The accumulated evidence that we, as a nation, cannot afford Alzheimer's disease is now overwhelming. With Medicaid and Medicare bearing the brunt of the exorbitant expense to care for people with Alzheimer's, our only option to avoid these crippling costs is to invest in research now at levels reflecting the magnitude of the epidemic," said Johns. "While this additional funding is very much needed to capitalize on immediate scientific opportunities, passage of the Alzheimer's Accountability Act sets up the potential for the sustained funding increases necessary to change the course of this epidemic."

The Alzheimer's Association commends Congress for its bipartisan dedication to Alzheimer's disease. The Association now encourages all parties – the House of Representatives, the Senate and the Obama Administration – to ensure enactment of this critical Alzheimer's legislation and the research funding within the bill.

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 alz.org.

###

¹ *Zissimopoulos, et al. The Value of Delaying Alzheimer's Disease Onset. Forum for Health Economics and Policy. November 2014.

² Monetary Costs of Dementia in the United States. New England Journal of Medicine. April 4, 2013.