

**Advocacy E-Newsletter
November 2010**



Advocacy is supporting a cause and having your voice heard by someone with the ability to make change. We speak for those who can't speak for themselves.

Greetings, fellow Alzheimer's Association advocates, and welcome to the many new advocates who signed up with us during Memory Walks held in the past two months! We applaud and appreciate your commitment to help put an end to Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. **Together we can make our voices be heard.** The climate is right, and awareness of the public health crisis of Alzheimer's disease is growing. On October 29, 2010 President Barack Obama issued a Presidential Proclamation that reads, in part:

“Now, therefore, I, Barack Obama, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 2010 as National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month. I call upon the people of the United States to learn more about Alzheimer's disease, and what they can do to support their families, friends, and neighbors who care for those with the disease.”

Federal Priorities

The US Senate and House members reconvened November 15 to complete their work in the 111th Congress before the new or reelected legislators take their seats in January for the first session of the 112th Congress. The Congress that will be in session between the post-election reconvening in November and the new session in January is often called a “lame duck” Congress because some of the legislators will be shortly giving up their seats to others. However, there has been recent movement on the National Alzheimer’s Project Act, (S. 3036/H.R. 4689), the bill that would establish responsibility for developing a national plan for addressing Alzheimer’s disease-related research, programs and services. This bill, among others which are unrelated, has been referred to the U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee for consideration during the lame duck Congress prior to possible future votes in the US Senate and House. We need to continue our advocacy for passage of this important bill!

Here is a list of Arizona and Nevada legislators who have signed on to Federal Priority bills as co-sponsors to date:

The National Alzheimer’s Project Act (NAPA) (S. 3036/H.R. 4689)

To develop a coordinated federal strategic plan to address Alzheimer’s disease.

Rep. Harry Mitchell (D-AZ05)

Rep. Raul Grijalva (D-AZ07)

Rep. Gabrielle Giffords (D-AZ08)

The Alzheimer’s Breakthrough Act (S. 1492/H.R. 3286)

To increase funding for Alzheimer’s research.

Rep. Ed Pastor (D-AZ04)

Rep. Raul Grijalva (D-AZ07)

Rep. Shelley Berkley (D-NV01)

How Alzheimer’s Advocacy Has Led to System Change

Each month this newsletter will feature a concrete change in public policy that has directly resulted from advocacy. Today’s example occurred at the Federal level. Earlier this year the Social Security Administration (SSA) added early-onset Alzheimer’s disease to its Compassionate Allowances Initiative. This initiative identifies debilitating diseases and medical conditions that meet the SSA’s disability standards for Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Inclusion in the initiative allows for faster payment of Social Security benefits to individuals with Alzheimer’s disease. This change was made in part due to the efforts of Alzheimer’s advocates!

Advocate Training

The next advocate training session will be held January 27, 2011 at 6:00 – 8:00 PM Arizona time and 5:00 – 7:00 PM Nevada time. The training session will be delivered by webinar (computer and phone). Topics covered will include the meaning of advocacy, why it's important, concrete public policy changes that have resulted from advocacy, and how you can effectively advocate for people with dementia and their families. Anyone in the Chapter area who has a phone and computer available can participate at no charge. Contact Cathy Griner at 602-528-0545 ext. 229 or at cathy.griner@alz.org to sign up.

Advocate Database

A database of people who would like to be paired with an experienced advocate to visit a congressional leader's district office in their area is now available. Please send your name, congressional district, phone number, and email address to Cathy Griner at cathy.griner@alz.org if you are interested so legislator visits in small groups can be arranged. Don't know your state and federal districts and representatives? You can find a complete list at <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/findyourreps.xpd>.

IN CLOSING

Next month's e-newsletter will include updates on topics previously reported, news items of note, and more information about how Alzheimer's-related advocacy has positively impacted the lives of people with dementia and their families.

Please see http://alz.org/join_the_cause_advocacy.asp for a variety of information regarding advocacy efforts and results throughout the national organization.

Please call me at 602-528-0545 ext. 229 or send an email to cathy.griner@alz.org if you have any questions or comments, or if you would like to be removed from this email distribution list.

Above all, thank you for your commitment to the fight against Alzheimer's disease and related dementias!

Cathy Griner, LMSW
Alzheimer's Association Desert Southwest Chapter Director of Program and Advocacy

Please visit us on our website at alz.org/dsw. Thanks!

Cathy Griner, LMSW

Director of Program and Advocacy

Alzheimer's Association - Desert Southwest Chapter

1028 East McDowell

Phoenix, Arizona 85006

P 602-528-0545

F 602-528-0546

www.alz.org/dsw