



the compassion to care, the leadership to conquer

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Congressman Braley responds to Capitol Hill visit and co-sponsors
Alzheimer's legislation to signify commitment to 6th leading cause of death in
the United States**

Waterloo, Iowa – Congressman Braley co-sponsored the "*Health Outcomes, Planning, and Education (HOPE) for Alzheimer's Act*" (S.738/H.R. 1386) and the "*Alzheimer's Breakthrough Act*" (H.R. 1897). Last month several advocates from Iowa visited the nation's capitol urging elected officials to increase the federal focus on Alzheimer's disease. Today an estimated 5.4 million Americans live with Alzheimer's and that number is expected to soar to as many as 16 million by 2050. In addition to the growing number of people with the disease, there are also a significant number of family and friends caring for them – nearly 15 million according to the Alzheimer's Association *2011 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures* report. The Alzheimer's Association commends Congressman Braley for taking action against the growing threat of Alzheimer's.

The federal government has made significant commitments to combat diseases such as stroke, heart disease, HIV/AIDS and breast cancer. As a result, death rates from these diseases have declined. Meanwhile, no similar commitment has been made with respect to Alzheimer's disease. The consequence is that, between 2000 and 2008, the number of Americans who have died from Alzheimer's increased by 66 percent – making Alzheimer's disease the 6th leading cause of death in United States. "For every \$2.50 the federal government spends on care for Alzheimer's disease patients, it only spends one cent on Alzheimer's research. Solving the Alzheimer's crisis requires addressing the chronic underinvestment in Alzheimer's research. Only through such research will treatments –and eventually a cure – be found," said Kelly Hauer, Executive Director of the Alzheimer's Association East Central Iowa Chapter. "We applaud Congressman Braley for being the first Iowa policy maker to co-sponsor the HOPE for Alzheimer's and Breakthrough Acts, and we urge other Iowa Congressional leaders to make the same commitment as soon as possible," Hauer added.

The HOPE for Alzheimer's Act will improve diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease and increase access to information, care and support for newly diagnosed individuals and their families - providing essential support for those facing this devastating, debilitating disease. Although Alzheimer's disease is diagnosed correctly up to 90 percent of the time by physicians with specialized training, as many as half of individuals meeting specific diagnostic for dementia never receive a diagnosis - and some evidence suggests it could be as high as 80 percent. The HOPE for Alzheimer's Act will ensure the diagnosis is documented in the person's primary medical record - enabling health care providers to anticipate and prevent potential complications in the management of other conditions (such as heart disease and diabetes) and allowing for care coordination among treating physicians. In addition, the HOPE for Alzheimer's Act will ensure that patients diagnosed with dementia receive access to education about coping with and preparing for a future with this fatal disease.

According to the Alzheimer's Association *2011 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures* report, over the next 40 years, caring for individuals with Alzheimer's will cost American society \$20 trillion including \$15 trillion to Medicare and Medicaid. The Alzheimer's Breakthrough Act would require the Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to accelerate the development of treatments that prevent, cure, or slow the progression of Alzheimer's disease and reduce the financial burden of Alzheimer's on federally funded programs and families. The bill requires the director of NIH to develop a research plan to overcome Alzheimer's disease and to make annual appropriations and budget requests to accomplish the science necessary to achieve a world without Alzheimer's.

To become an advocate for those with Alzheimer's disease or to learn more about the HOPE and Breakthrough Acts, visit www.alz.org/advocacy.

About the Alzheimer's Association:

The Alzheimer's Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer 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/eci.

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