



the compassion to care, the leadership to conquer

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## **President Obama Signs Landmark Legislation For a National Alzheimer Strategy**

The National Alzheimer's Project Act will create a coordinated strategic national plan to focus government efforts and ensure that appropriate resources are maximized and leveraged to find better treatments, a means of prevention, and ample care and supportive services for the millions of families who live with the challenges of this disease every day.

In passing this legislation and signing it into law, the nation's leaders have signaled their understanding of the fundamental need for a coordinated federal approach to confront one of America's most feared and costly diseases by passing this legislation.

Today there are more than 5 million Americans living with this disease, including as many as 69,000 in Iowa; these numbers will only soar with an aging baby boomer generation beginning to advance into higher risk for developing the disease.

"On behalf of the 69,000 people living with this disease in Iowa and the multitude of Alzheimer advocates from across the state who reached out to their elected officials to tell them to support this important legislation, I applaud the Obama Administration for understanding that NAPA is fundamental to turning the tide for not only families but also for the fiscal foundation of the country," said Carol Sipfle, Executive Director of the Greater Iowa Chapter. "It will serve to make significant inroads to dealing with public health threat Alzheimer poses to the state and the nation and we are grateful."

Alzheimer's disease is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States, and the fifth leading cause of death in Iowa. In fact, among the ten leading causes of death, it is by far the fastest growing – increasing more than 50 percent from 2000 to 2007. Alzheimer's is the only disease in the top ten causes of death without a way to prevent, cure, or even slow its progression.

Building on the recommendations of the Alzheimer's Study Group, an independent, bipartisan panel created to evaluate the government's current efforts to combat the disease, NAPA would create a national strategic plan for the Alzheimer's disease crisis. NAPA will establish an inter-agency council to work with the Secretary of the Health and Human Services to comprehensively assess and address Alzheimer research, care, institutional services and

home and community based programs. NAPA would ensure strategic planning and coordination of the fight against Alzheimer's across the federal government as a whole.

Alzheimer's doesn't just affect individuals – it affects and changes the lives of entire families. For the 11 million caregivers nationally, including 106,474 here in Iowa, Alzheimer's can take everything a caregiver has to give, representing a serious threat to their finances, job security, and health.

But beyond the human impact on families, the economic burden - with total care costs escalating from \$172 billion today to more than \$1 trillion by 2050 – is significant as well. Ensuring there will be a coordinated, integrated national plan to address Alzheimer's, NAPA will work to shape an important framework that will help to change the trajectory of the disease.

We need transformative, cost-effective strategic solutions to tackle a national public health emergency with widespread social and economic consequences and NAPA will help to put the nation on the right path.

### **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](http://www.alz.org).

The Alzheimer's Association Greater Iowa Chapter covers 58 of Iowa's 99 counties and five counties in Illinois. The chapter directly serves more than 21,000 individuals annually through its core services of information and referral, care consultation, education, safety services and support groups. Headquartered in West Des Moines the Greater Iowa Chapter maintains five branch offices throughout Iowa. For additional information please contact us at 1.800.272.3900 or visit [www.alz.org/greateriowa](http://www.alz.org/greateriowa).