



the compassion to care, the leadership to conquer

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NATIONAL ALZHEIMER'S PROJECT ACT
Alzheimer's Association Statement

Washington, D.C., February 24, 2010 – As the leading voluntary health and advocacy organization in Alzheimer care, support and research, the Alzheimer's Association commends Senators Evan Bayh (D-IN) and Susan Collins (R-ME) for their recognition of the escalating Alzheimer threat. By introducing the "*National Alzheimer's Project Act*," the Senators signal their understanding of the fundamental need for a coordinated federal approach to confront one of America's most feared and costly diseases.

"Alzheimer's disease is a debilitating illness that affects more than 5 million Americans and their families every day," said Bayh, a member of the Senate Special Committee on Aging. "Creating the National Alzheimer's Project Office will ensure we get better research, improved patient care and hopefully a cure for this devastating disease. At a time when medical research dollars are too scarce, it is critical that every dollar spent on Alzheimer's disease be used to get the best possible care for patients."

120,000 individuals in Indiana currently live with Alzheimer's disease and this number is projected to grow to 130,000 by 2025. "We are proud that Senator Bayh has taken the lead on this vital issue affecting so many Hoosiers and families across the country," said Teri Shirk, President and CEO of the Greater Kentucky and Southern Indiana Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association.

Today there is no one government entity whose sole purpose is to mount a full campaign against Alzheimer's disease which, without the discovery and development of effective treatments, is poised to strike 10 million baby boomers over the coming years. Building on the recommendations offered by the Alzheimer's Study Group (ASG), an independent, bipartisan panel created to evaluate the government's current efforts to combat the disease, this legislation creates a National Alzheimer's Project Office at the Department of Health and Human Services and an inter-agency Advisory Council that is responsible for creating a national plan to confront the escalating crisis. Drawing on the expertise residing in various government agencies as well as individuals living with the disease, caregivers, providers and other stakeholders, this office would provide strategic planning and coordination for the fight against Alzheimer's across the federal government as a whole.

In addition to the devastating impact on families, Alzheimer's also threatens the nation's health care system because of its significant costs. According to the Alzheimer's Association's *2009 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures* report, total healthcare costs are more than three times higher for people with Alzheimer's and other dementias than for other people the same age without the disease. America simply cannot afford this human, social and economic burden.

“On behalf of the millions of people living with Alzheimer’s and the millions more at risk of developing this terminal disease in the future, the Alzheimer’s Association is grateful for the leadership of Senators Bayh and Collins. This legislation, if enacted, would significantly improve the nation’s ability to overcome the rapidly mounting Alzheimer crisis,” said Robert J. Egge, the Alzheimer’s Association’s Vice President of Public Policy and Advocacy.

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.

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