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**OSCAR WINNER MARCIA GAY HARDEN TESTIFIES BEFORE
SENATE ABOUT PERSONAL EXPERIENCE AS AN ALZHEIMER'S
CAREGIVER**

Actress joined on Capitol Hill by thousands of Advocates encouraging Congress to prioritize disease

WASHINGTON, D.C., June 19, 2018 — Academy Award-winning actress Marcia Gay Harden today appeared before the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging to advocate on behalf of the more than 5 million Americans currently living with Alzheimer's disease, including her mother, urging Congress to continue to prioritize critical legislation and disease-research funding increases. Her testimony highlighted the emotional and financial toll Alzheimer's and other dementias take on millions of American families.

"I am here today to honor my mother and the millions like her, who are currently living with Alzheimer's disease," said Harden. "I am also here to honor my siblings, who join me and more than 16 million others across America who serve as caregivers to our loved ones. Last but certainly not least, I am here to thank our champions in the Senate for their significant policy contributions to the fight against Alzheimer's, and urge Congress to sustain their support by increasing federal funding for research and by advancing legislation that will improve the lives of those living with this devastating disease."

In her testimony, delivered during the Committee's hearing [*Changing the Trajectory of Alzheimer's: Reducing Risk, Detecting Early Symptoms, and Improving Data*](#), Harden urged legislators to pass the bipartisan Building Our Largest Dementia (BOLD) Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Act (S. 2076/H.R. 4256), which would ensure communities across the country have access to resources that promote effective Alzheimer's interventions and focus on important public health issues such as increasing early detection and preventing avoidable hospitalizations.

"As scientists continue to search for a way to prevent, cure, or slow the progression of Alzheimer's through medical research, public health can play an important role in promoting brain health and cognitive function, and reducing the risk of cognitive decline," Harden testified. "It is imperative that we as a country invest in a nationwide Alzheimer's public health response to achieve a higher quality of life for those living with the disease and their caregivers."

Further bolstering Harden's personal testimony were the more than 1,200 Alzheimer's Association advocates who convened on Capitol Hill today for individual meeting with Members of Congress during the 30th Annual Alzheimer's Association AIM Advocacy Forum, the nation's premier Alzheimer's disease advocacy event.

"The progress Congress has made in recent years to prioritize Alzheimer's has been essential, and we thank them for their commitment. Still, our advocates are here to ask them to continue to prioritize Alzheimer's as, more is needed to sufficiently address the public health crisis posed by Alzheimer's, which continues to rank both as America's most expensive disease and the only leading cause of death that cannot be prevented, cured or even slowed," said Robert Egge, Alzheimer's Association Chief Public Policy Officer and AIM Executive Director. "Together with Congress and our advocates from across the

country, the Association is committed to advancing policies to support those living with the disease, and their caregivers, like Mrs. Harden, who make many personal and financial sacrifices to ensure that their loved ones have the care they need.”

According to the Alzheimer’s Association [2018 Alzheimer’s Disease Facts & Figures](#) report, 83 percent of help provided to older adults in the United States comes from family members, friends or other unpaid caregivers. Nearly half of all caregivers who provide help to older adults do so for someone with Alzheimer’s or another dementia.

Of the total lifetime cost of caring for someone with dementia, 70 percent is borne by families—either through out-of-pocket health and long-term care expenses or from the value of unpaid care. Last year alone, caregivers of people with Alzheimer’s or other dementias provided an estimated 18.4 billion hours of unpaid assistance valued at \$232.1 billion.

For more information on Alzheimer’s disease, visit alz.org.

Alzheimer’s Association®

The Alzheimer’s Association is the 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.

Alzheimer’s Impact Movement

The Alzheimer’s Impact Movement (AIM) is the advocacy arm of the Alzheimer’s Association. AIM works to develop and advance policies to overcome Alzheimer’s disease through increased investment in research, enhanced care and improved support. For more information, visit alzimpact.org.

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