

# Advocate Spotlight



***Maria Deneau, CDP***  
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*Maria Deneau and Representative Brad Wenstrup*

Alzheimer's disease has affected me both personally and professionally. I watched my Mom struggle for 11 years with Alzheimer's disease until she passed away in 2015.

It was a traumatic experience for my whole family just watching her decline without being able to do anything for her, so I became an advocate because of that and the need for better resources and healthcare.

I have been an advocate since 2011 in Michigan and Ohio, serving as ambassador for Congressman Fred Upton in Michigan and now for Congressman Brad Wenstrup in Ohio's 2nd congressional district.

I'm proud to have accomplished getting certain bills and legislation pushed forward including The Hope for Alzheimer's act and most recently the Alzheimer's Accountability Act, along with helping to budget funds for dementia-specific research (\$425 million to the NIH to \$3.6 billion currently).

Of course, raising awareness and writing curated published articles (Maria Shriver's Women's Alzheimer's Movement, also one of her ambassadors) to showcase my own personal connection to this disease has been rewarding, along with my daily work with families looking for placement options and educating them.

The pain and stigma are real.