



Oct. 11, 2023

Dear Madam Chair Gossage and members of the Bethell Committee:

As you are preparing your recommendations for the State Legislature for 2024, the Alzheimer's Association is grateful for the opportunity to request funding that is important to those with Alzheimer's in Kansas and their families. Kansas' aging population is increasing rapidly. Within the next eight years, the entire "Baby Boom" generation will be over the age of 65. After 2034, there will be more older adults than children for the first time in U.S. history. 55,000 Kansans have Alzheimer's and that number is expected to increase to 62,000 by 2025, an increase of 12.7%. The majority of people who develop Alzheimer's are 65 years or older. While Alzheimer's is not part of the normal aging process, age is the greatest risk factor. The percentage of those with Alzheimer's disease increases with age: 5% age 65-74, 13% age 75-84, and 33.2% age 85 or older.

In Kansas, there are 85,000 caregivers taking care of their loved ones with Alzheimer's. More than half of them have been doing so for at least two years. More than one-fourth of Alzheimer's and dementia caregivers provide 20 or more hours of care per week. Almost one in four dementia caregivers are in the "sandwich generation"—caring for both someone with dementia and a child or grandchild. In addition, family caregivers frequently suffer from health problems including a much higher incidence of poor physical and mental health, more specifically a higher rate of depression.

We are requesting relief for Kansas caregivers who provide essential care to their loved ones by helping them gain access to respite care. Respite care is a service that gives the caregiver a break from caregiving duties. Respite benefits both the individual with Alzheimer's as well as the family caregiver. Respite provides people with dementia a safe environment to participate in activities that are designed to match their needs and





abilities. These services are provided in a number of settings — in the home, the community, adult day or residential settings.

Under this proposed program, KDADS allocates funding to Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) to assist individuals to purchase respite services and goods related to the care of someone with Alzheimer's disease. In any calendar year, up to \$1,000 per person may be available, depending on the person's need for services. To be eligible for the program - The caregiver must live in the same residence as the care receiver. Persons residing in long-term care communities are ineligible. The care receiver must have a diagnosis of probable Alzheimer's disease or related dementia. The care receiver's residence must be in Kansas. Enrollment in the program is contingent upon funding availability, and distributed on a first come, first served basis.

Family caregiver relief will ease the burden, enhance quality of life and reduce the number of persons with dementia who are prematurely or unnecessarily placed in a long term care setting. Hopefully by delaying or preventing long term care, this will help with workforce issues and help reduce state costs. Therefore, we are requesting \$600,000 in SGF for respite care funding with 10% of that going to the Area Agencies on Aging toward administrative costs.

I am happy to take questions at the appropriate time.

Sincerely,

Jamie Gideon, Kansas Director of Public Policy, Alzheimer's Association

jjgideon@alz.org (316) 448-6588

