

Latinos Against Alzheimer's Coalition

Executive Director

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Our Coalition Members Include

Dialogue on Diversity
Fuerza Contra Alzheimer's
Labor Council of Latin American Advancement
MAAC Project
MANA - A National Latina Organization
Multicultural Coalition on Aging
National Latino Behavioral Health Association
(NLBHA)
The Hispanic Federation
The Latino Alzheimer's & Memories Disorders
Alliance (LAMDA)
The Latino Coalition
The League of United Latin American Citizens
(LULAC)
The National Association of Hispanic Nurses
(NAHN)
The National Hispanic Council on Aging (NHCOA)
The National Latino Medical Student Association
(LMSA)
The USC Edward R. Roybal Institute on Aging

Convened by the UsAgainstAlzheimer's Network

July 15, 2016

The Honorable Peter Roskam
United States Congress
2246 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Linda Sanchez
United States Congress
2329 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Roskam and Sanchez:

On behalf of the **LatinosAgainstAlzheimer's Coalition**, the nation's first-ever national coalition of Latino-serving organizations dedicated addressing the growing impact of dementia on Latino families, we are writing to endorse the **Alzheimer's Beneficiary and Caregiver Support Act**. We thank you for your leadership in addressing this growing hardship for Latino families and the nation.

As you both know very well, Alzheimer's disease and related dementias exact a significant toll on the family caregivers of those impacted by the disease. Ample evidence makes clear the impact a diagnosis of Alzheimer's on a loved one has on the physical, mental and emotional health of family caregivers as well as their financial health and well-being. In 2013, a report by the RAND Corporation that was funded by the National Institute on Aging (NIA) found that providing institutional and home-based care is the single greatest economic cost associated with dementia. This is particularly true for Latino family caregivers who have inadequate access to quality care resources and training.

According to the National Alliance for Caregiving, there are at least 8 million Latino family caregivers across the country and approximately 1.8 million are providing care for a loved one – oftentimes a parent - with Alzheimer's or dementia. Further, research finds that Hispanic family caregivers tend to be in more intensive caregiving situations with 63 percent in high burden situations compared to 51 percent of non-Hispanic caregivers. Such informal or non-paid care added between \$50 to \$100 billion to the \$109 billion cost of paid care, and more than 15 million Americans are providing more than 18 million hours of informal care to support persons with Alzheimer's every single year according to the 2016 edition of Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures.

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Thankfully, a growing body of evidence developed over the years indicates that when such informal (*non-paid*) caregivers are provided with targeted counseling and supportive services, their health and well-being improves, which enables them in turn to continue care for their loved one in their own home for longer periods of time. This provides a benefit to the patient and family as well as to our taxpayers since a sizeable component of long-term institutional care is financed by the Medicaid program.

The **Alzheimer's Beneficiary and Caregiver Support Act** will authorize the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to conduct a demonstration project to evaluate the impact caregiver support models could have on the care of Medicare beneficiaries diagnosed with Alzheimer's or a related form of dementia. Given the the growing need that exist for such a program, this demonstration provides immense value for families. This program would be a critical step toward making a caregiver support benefit a permanent part of the Medicare program, driving improvement in the quality of life of beneficiaries with Alzheimer's and related dementias and limiting the extensive care costs associated with this condition.

The LatinosAgainstAlzheimer's Coalition – convened by UsAgainstAlzheimer's - applauds your leadership on this bipartisan effort. We have been honored to work closely with both of your offices over the past several months to develop this initiative, and we look forward to doing everything we can to support your leadership to enact this common-sense legislation into law this Congress. This is a critical issue for millions of Latino family caregivers living and struggling in the shadows.

Thank you,

The LatinosAgainstAlzheimer's Network

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