

FEDERAL PRIORITIES 2011

Alzheimer's disease is a growing crisis for our families and the economy. The federal government must address the challenges the disease poses and take bold action to confront this epidemic now.

1. Increase the commitment to Alzheimer's research

H.R. 1897

Over the next 40 years, Alzheimer's will cost our country \$20 trillion. But a treatment that delayed onset of Alzheimer's by just five years would reduce Medicare spending on those with the disease by 45 percent in 2050. Unfortunately, there continues to be a chronic underinvestment in Alzheimer's disease research. The *Alzheimer's Breakthrough Act* would require a federal commitment to accelerating treatments that prevent, cure, or slow the progression of the disease and thus reduce the costs to the federal government and families. It would make Alzheimer's research a priority at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), create public-private partnerships, and ensure that the NIH requests the funding necessary to get the job done.

2. Expand diagnosis and care planning

S. 738/H.R. 1386

In order to provide better medical care and outcomes for individuals with Alzheimer's and other dementias, possible dementia must first be detected, the disease must then be diagnosed, care must be planned, and the diagnosis must be noted in the patient's medical record. Studies also suggest that early diagnosis and care planning are keys to the improved long-term health of caregivers. The *Health Outcomes, Planning, and Education (HOPE) for Alzheimer's Act* would expand diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease, provide information on medical and non-medical services for newly-diagnosed patients and their families, and require that a diagnosis be noted in a patient's medical record.

3. Implement the *National Alzheimer's Project Act*

In 2050, up to 16 million Americans will have Alzheimer's disease, creating an enormous strain on the health care system, families, and the federal budget. Recognizing this growing crisis, Congress unanimously passed and President Obama signed into law the *National Alzheimer's Project Act* (NAPA). Now, the Secretary of Health and Human Services must thoroughly and expeditiously implement this law by creating a plan to comprehensively address the federal government's efforts on Alzheimer's research, care, institutional services, and home- and community-based programs.