

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 26, 2015

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
S. 128 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
S. 128 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS & Education
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS & Education
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairmen Cochran and Blunt and Ranking Members Mikulski and Murray:

As you work to assemble the Fiscal Year 2016 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations Act, we urge you to continue to prioritize and build upon your commitments to Alzheimer's disease research and care initiatives.

Alzheimer's disease and other dementias pose a grave threat to the health and fiscal well-being of our nation. More than five million Americans are living with Alzheimer's today, a number that is projected to increase to 14 million by 2050. Alzheimer's and other dementias also cost our nation an estimated \$226 billion a year, including \$153 billion in costs to Medicare and Medicaid. At a time when the United States is spending more than \$200 billion to care for Alzheimer's patients, we are spending less than \$600 million per year on Alzheimer's research. Surely we can do more for Alzheimer's given the tremendous human and economic costs of this devastating disease.

While the challenges posed by Alzheimer's are significant, continued breakthroughs in science and therapy could help achieve the national goal of preventing and effectively treating Alzheimer's disease by 2025. This is the benchmark set in the National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease authorized by the bipartisan National Alzheimer's Project Act (Public Law 111-375), which Congress passed unanimously in December 2010.

Achieving this goal will require both public and private sector support. Today, the NIH commits about \$585 million to Alzheimer's disease and dementia research, compared to just \$450 million in FY 2011. This is a tremendous improvement, but remains far short of the levels leading experts have estimated will be needed to maximize our likelihood of achieving the 2025 goal. Moreover, the amount of meritorious Alzheimer's and dementia research far exceeds

NIH's funding capacity. To that end, we urge you to continue making Alzheimer's disease research at the NIH a priority so that we can ramp up to the level necessary to achieve the 2025 goal set by the National Plan.

We also urge you to keep in mind the millions of Americans and their families affected by this disease today and the tens of millions who will be affected in the coming years. We therefore also urge you to provide appropriate supports to Alzheimer's disease and dementia initiatives supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL) that seek to support family caregivers of persons with Alzheimer's and dementia and to expand awareness and understanding of this disease.

We understand the challenges you face in setting FY 2016 appropriations levels, and we thank you for your consideration of this request.

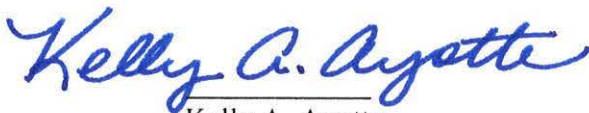
Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



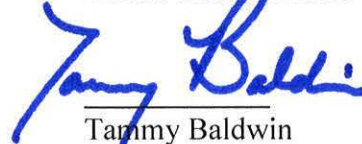
Kelly A. Ayotte
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Roger F. Wicker
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



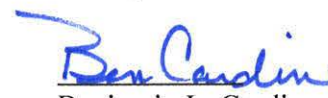
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Barbara Boxer
United States Senator



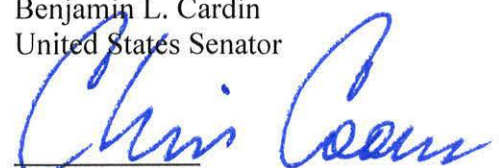
Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator



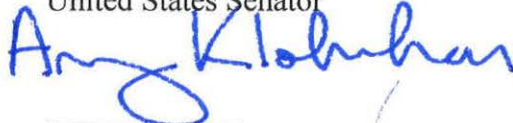
Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



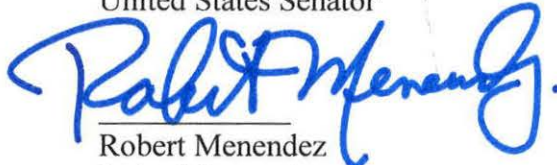
Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Kirsten E. Gillibrand
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



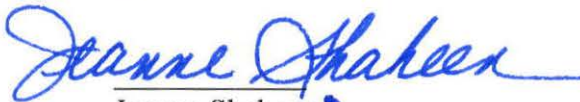
Robert Menendez
United States Senator



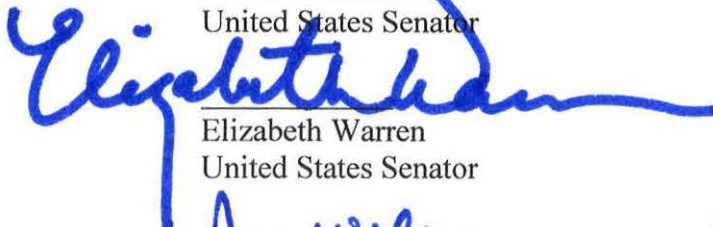
Bill Nelson
United States Senator



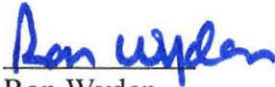
Jack Reed
United States Senator



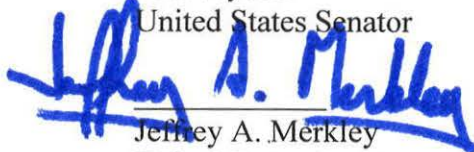
Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Al Franken
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



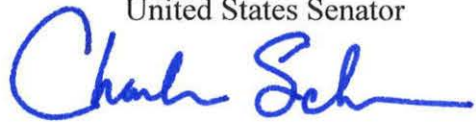
Patrick Leahy
United States Senator



Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



Gary Peters
United States Senator



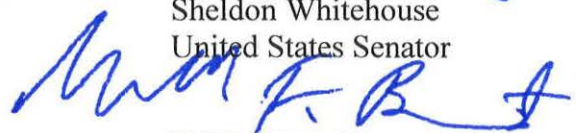
Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator