

UsAgainstAlzheimer's

March 24, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
2-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Democratic Leader
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Congressional Action and Protecting Family Caregivers

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, and Leader McCarthy:

We applaud the passage of The Families First Coronavirus Response Act and appreciate the bipartisan leadership that led to this critical response to the global public health crisis triggered by COVID19. However, there is a tremendous need for accelerated action to support family caregivers put in jeopardy by the coronavirus, which disproportionately effects older Americans. We are concerned that each additional rendition of COVID19 response legislation is overlooking those who are the most vulnerable, including seniors (persons over the age of 60) and those living with chronic conditions like Alzheimer's and their caregivers. This is both dangerous and shortsighted.

In fact, at the time of the transmittal of this letter, the Senate is preparing a third emergency relief bill that:

- Adds a provision that could require employees to take all 10 days of leave at the same time or lose them if they come back to work.
- Expands the small business hardship exemption from paid sick days requirements to include family care (previously only pertained to school closures).
- Gives OMB the authority to exempt executive branch employees

To support caregivers of loved ones living with chronic conditions, we urge you to expand paid leave benefits in any paid leave provision of future COVID19 response legislation to cover the following populations:

- People who are caring for loved ones with a serious medical condition like Alzheimer's or dementia who have not been quarantined or show symptoms of COVID-19.
- People whose loved one's caregiving arrangements and adult day care centers are no longer in operation due to caregiver illness (including home health aids) or closures due to COVID-19 and related quarantine recommendations or requirements.
- People who work at a company with more than 500 employees; those large companies are exempted from the paid family leave requirement.

As advocates for family caregivers, we urge you to support our nation's 44 million family caregivers, including 5.8 million individuals living with Alzheimer's disease, in future COVID19 response legislation. We stand ready to support you and would be happy to serve as a resource should you have any questions or require additional information. We thank you for your consideration and work to address the COVID19 public health crisis.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Aging Research

Alice W. Watkins, Retired Executive Director, Alzheimer's North Carolina

Alzheimer's Los Angeles

Alzheimer's Mississippi

Alzheimer's Orange County

American Geriatrics Society

American Medical Women's Association

Caregiver Action Network

Caring Across Generations

Center to Advance Palliative Care

Flawless Foundation

HFC (Hilarity for Charity)

Ian Kremer, Esq., Executive Director, LEAD Coalition (Leaders Engaged on Alzheimer's Disease)

National Association for Female Executives

National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a)

National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP)

National Consumers League

Paul Irving, Chairman, Milken Institute Center for the Future of Aging

The Gerontological Society of America

The Lewy Body Dementia Association

Thomas Jefferson University