

Public Policy Division
1212 New York Ave NW
Suite 800
Washington, DC 20005

202.393.7737 p
866.865.0270 f
www.alz.org



March 3, 2016

Senator Charles Grassley
Chairman
Senate Judiciary Committee
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Senator Charles Schumer
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Grassley and Senator Schumer,

On behalf of the Alzheimer's Association, thank you for your continued leadership on issues of importance to Americans with Alzheimer's disease and their caregivers. The Alzheimer's Association supports the reauthorization of the Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Alert Program in *Kevin and Avonte's Law of 2016*, which would help local law enforcement identify and reunite individuals with Alzheimer's disease and their families.

The Alzheimer's Association is the world's leading voluntary health organization on Alzheimer's care, support and research. As you know, there are more than 5 million Americans living with Alzheimer's disease, which is the sixth leading cause of death and the only cause of death in the top 10 without a way to prevent, cure or even slow its progression. Alzheimer's disease is the most costly disease in the United States and is set to increase like no other. In 2015, the cost of caring for those with Alzheimer's disease will reach \$226 billion, and is expected to grow to \$1.1 trillion by 2050. Without significant breakthroughs in the development of treatments or a cure, it is projected that as many as 16 million Americans will have Alzheimer's by 2050.

As the threat of Alzheimer's continues to touch more people's lives, the safety of these individuals will continue to be of tremendous concern. It is common for a person with dementia to experience profound disorientation and wander from their homes or care facilities, and many do so repeatedly. At least 60 percent of individuals with Alzheimer's disease will wander at some point during their lifetime. Wandering not only affects individuals with dementia – sometimes leading to serious injury or death, but also causes considerable emotional strain on families and caregivers. In some instances, wandering can even endanger the lives of others within the community.

Kevin and Avonte's Law of 2016 will help Alzheimer's patients who wander away from their homes and are unable to tell people in the community who they are or where they live. The bill reauthorizes a Department of Justice program that helps local law enforcement officials quickly identify wandering Alzheimer's patients and reunite them with their families. Reauthorization of the Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Alert

Program is essential to addressing the issue of wandering and Alzheimer's disease, and its impact on individuals with Alzheimer's and their family caregivers, local communities and law enforcement.

The Alzheimer's Association deeply appreciates your continued leadership on behalf of all Americans living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. If you have any questions about this or any other legislation, please contact Rachel Conant, Director of Federal Affairs, at rconant@alz.org or 202.638.7121.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'REgge', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert Egge
Vice President, Public Policy