

June 28, 2018

The Honorable Alex Azar
Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Azar:

We, the undersigned groups, who supported enactment of the bipartisan Recognize, Assist, Include, Support, and Engage (RAISE) Family Caregivers Act (P.L. 115-119), write to urge immediate and effective implementation of this law to help better recognize and support our country's family caregivers. This is an issue that affects just about everyone. Most individuals are, have been, or will be a family caregiver or will need the help of one in the future.

Family caregivers are the backbone of services and supports in this country – they help loved ones of all ages live independently in their homes and communities where they want to be, helping to save taxpayer dollars by delaying and preventing more costly care and unnecessary hospitalizations. About 40 million family caregivers provide about \$470 billion annually in unpaid care to their loved ones. About 3.7 million family caregivers provide care to a child under age 18 because of a medical, behavioral, or other condition or disability, and 6.5 million family caregivers assist both adults and children. Our country relies on the contributions family caregivers make and should recognize and support them. Family caregivers help with daily tasks such as eating, bathing, dressing, transportation, medical/nursing tasks such as managing multiple medications, managing finances, coordinating services, and much more. In doing so, they take on physical, emotional, and financial challenges.

The RAISE Family Caregivers Act requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to develop a strategy to support family caregivers within 18 months of enactment. The law establishes an advisory council to bring together representatives from both the private and public sectors to advise and make recommendations. The law outlines specific timetables for action and deliverables. The strategy would identify recommended actions that communities, providers, government, and others are taking and may take to recognize and support family caregivers. The law would implement the federal Commission on Long-Term Care's bipartisan recommendation that Congress require the development of a strategy to support family caregivers and is consistent with a 2016 recommendation by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine calling for a family caregiver strategy.

We are so pleased that this legislation passed Congress with strong bipartisan support and was signed into law by the President. Now, your leadership is important to the law's successful implementation. We urge you to move forward with prompt implementation of the law. We stand ready to work with you and assist with implementation, and we appreciate your prompt attention to this important issue. Millions of individuals count on

family caregivers every day. Family caregivers are counting on implementation of this commonsense law.

Feel free to have your staff contact Rhonda Richards on AARP's Government Affairs staff at richards@aarps.org or 202-434-3791 if you have any questions or need any additional information. Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to working with you to support our nation's family caregivers.

Sincerely,

AARP
ACCSES
Allies for Independence
Altarum Program to Improve Eldercare
Alzheimer's Association
Alzheimer's Foundation of America
Alzheimer's Impact Movement
American Academy of Nursing
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association on Health and Disability
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Geriatrics Society
American Health Care Association
American Heart Association
American Network of Community Options & Resources (ANCOR)
American Psychological Association
American Society on Aging
American Therapeutic Recreation Association
America's Health Insurance Plans
Association of Oncology Social Work
Association of University Centers on Disabilities
Autism Society of America
Autism Speaks
Cambia Health Solutions
Caregiver Action Network
Caregiver Voices United
Caring Across Generations
Center to Advance Palliative Care
Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation
Coalition for Compassionate Care of California
Coalition to Transform Advanced Care (C-TAC)
Easterseals
Eldercare Workforce Alliance
Elizabeth Dole Foundation
Family Caregiver Alliance
Family Voices
Genworth Financial
Gerontological Society of America

Home Instead Senior Care
The Jewish Federations of North America
Justice in Aging
Lakeshore Foundation
LeadingAge
Lutheran Services in America
Medicare Rights Center
Motion Picture & Television Fund
National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys
National Adult Day Services Association (NADSA)
National Alliance for Caregiving
National Association for Home Care and Hospice
National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a)
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association of Social Workers (NASW)
National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE)
National Center for Assisted Living
National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare
National Council on Aging
National Disability Rights Network
National Hispanic Council on Aging
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
National Partnership for Hospice Innovation
National Patient Advocate Foundation
National Respite Coalition
Network of Jewish Human Services Agencies
Oncology Nursing Society (ONS)
Oral Health America
Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA)
Pediatric Palliative Care Coalition
PHI – Paraprofessional Healthcare Institute
Physician Assistants in Hospice and Palliative Medicine
ResolutionCare Network
Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving
The Arc of the United States
The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research
Trinity Health

cc: Deputy Secretary Hargan
Assistant Secretary for Aging and ACL Administrator Robertson