

## **Family Caregiver Awareness, Resources, and Education (CARE) Partnerships Act**

*Representative Debbie Dingell*

Approximately one in five Americans support the everyday needs of children or adults with disabilities and health conditions, such as assistance with dressing, meals, medications, finances, and transportation. These family caregivers are the relatives, friends, and neighbors who provide long-term services and supports (LTSS) that give people the option to remain in their own homes and communities instead of moving to an institutional setting. While family caregiving is often highly rewarding, it can involve significant emotional, physical, and financial challenges. In addition, family caregivers often sacrifice self-care to prioritize the people they support. These challenges place caregivers at risk of mental and physical health conditions that also threaten the well-being of the millions of Americans who depend on their care. Family caregivers provide the vast majority of LTSS in the United States, and public health approaches are urgently needed to address caregivers' needs before they experience a debilitating health crisis of their own.

The Family CARE Partnerships Act would amend the Public Health Service Act to build a public health infrastructure that promotes the health of family caregivers who support people of all ages with disabilities and health conditions. Proactively addressing the unique needs of family caregivers from a broad, multi-sector public health perspective would help to maintain their own health and their ability to continue providing essential care.

The **Family CARE Partnerships Act** would:

- **Establish national or regional centers of excellence related to public health practice in family caregiving:** These centers would drive innovation in three primary ways:
  - **Increasing knowledge about family caregiver health risks and support resources** by educating public health officials, health care and social services professionals, and the public.
  - **Advancing the use of evidence-based strategies to benefit family caregiver health** by supporting public health officials in the application of these strategies.
  - **Creating or expanding public-private partnerships** by facilitating activities to promote awareness, resources, and education to support family caregiver health.
- **Support public health departments in activities to promote family caregiver health:** This bill would provide funding to public health departments to support the development, implementation, and evaluation of evidence-based strategies to improve family caregiver health, including those outlined in the National Strategy to Support Family Caregivers.
- **Strengthen data collection and reporting on family caregiver health:** This bill would expand the collection, analysis, public reporting, and public dissemination of data at the State and national levels on family caregiver health. These activities would include monitoring related objectives in the Healthy People 2030 Report and in future reports.

**Current sponsoring organizations:** Alzheimer's Foundation of America; American Association on Health and Disability; American College of Physicians; American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR); Autism Society of America; Brain Injury Association of America; Cure SMA; Gerontological Society of America; Lakeshore Foundation; Military Order of the Purple Heart; Moving Health Home; National Alliance for Caregiving; National Down Syndrome Society; Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy; Vietnam Veterans of America