



the compassion to care, the leadership to conquer

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**CONGRESS PASSES HISTORIC LEGISLATION THAT PROVIDES
FRAMEWORK FOR NATIONAL ALZHEIMER STRATEGY**

Washington, DC (December 15, 2010) – As the leading care, research and advocacy organization for Alzheimer's disease, the Alzheimer's Association® applauds Congress for passage of the *National Alzheimer's Project Act (S. 3036, H.R. 4689)*, a significant step forward in the fight against Alzheimer's disease. The *National Alzheimer's Project Act (NAPA)* provides an essential framework for the development of a national strategic plan.

Championed in the House by the co-chairs of the bipartisan Congressional Task Force on Alzheimer's, Representatives Ed Markey (D-Mass.) and Christopher Smith (R-NJ), passage of this legislation signals a recognition from the nation's leaders that a coordinated federal approach is necessary to confront one of America's most feared and costly diseases.

"When America has a game plan, America wins. Passage of this bill means we will help ensure that the federal government better coordinates all of the research and clinical programs dealing with Alzheimer's, which is now the seventh leading cause of death in the United States," said Representative Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.). This legislation requires a plan for beating Alzheimer's and represents an important step forward in our country's efforts in this area."

"The passage today of the National Alzheimer's Project Act is a huge step forward in our battle against the crisis of Alzheimer's disease," Smith said. "With the incredible devastation of over five million Americans afflicted with Alzheimer's disease at an estimated cost of over \$170 billion – numbers expected to skyrocket in coming years without effective interventions – we need to be sure we are doing everything possible to reverse the course of this disease. By requiring the development of a coordinated, integrated national plan to address Alzheimer's, NAPA will provide the framework to accelerate the development of efficacious care and treatments."

Building on the work of the Alzheimer's Association and the recommendations of the Alzheimer's Study Group, an independent, bipartisan panel created to evaluate the government's current efforts to combat the disease, NAPA will lead to the creation of a national strategic plan to overcome the Alzheimer's disease epidemic. It would also establish an inter-agency council to work with the Health and Human Services Secretary to give a full assessment of what needs to be done to address the threat of Alzheimer's on multiple fronts including care, research and support. NAPA would ensure strategic planning and coordination of the fight against Alzheimer's across the federal government as a whole.

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“Today there are more than 5 million Americans living with this disease and this number is expected to soar to as many as 16 million by mid-century. This bipartisan legislation creates a new, much needed framework for addressing this public health threat,” said Harry Johns, President and CEO of the Alzheimer’s Association. “Passage of NAPA is a hard earned win for the hundreds of thousands of Alzheimer advocates across the nation who have joined with the Alzheimer’s Association in making this a top legislative priority for the 111th Congress. By sending this bill to President Obama’s desk, this Congress will be remembered by the Alzheimer community for launching a critical effort to confront the grave public health threat of Alzheimer’s.”

Alzheimer’s doesn’t just affect individuals – it impacts entire families. For the 11 million caregivers, Alzheimer’s can take everything a caregiver has to give representing a serious threat to their finances, job security, and health. But beyond the human impact on families, the economic burden - with total care costs escalating from \$172 billion today to more than \$1 trillion by 2050 – is significant as well. NAPA is fundamental to turning the tide for not only millions of families but also for the fiscal foundation of the country.

Maria Shriver, one of the nation's leading advocates for families struggling with Alzheimer's, has worked with the Alzheimer's Association to shine a spotlight on the disease, including the recent release of *The Shriver Report: A Woman's Nation Takes on Alzheimer's*, which explored the disease's impact on women.

“The passage today of the National Alzheimer’s Project Act is a momentous legislative victory for the millions of American families profoundly affected by this devastating disease, and the millions more who will be in the future,” said Maria Shriver, First Lady of California. “Thanks to the bipartisan action of Congress and the leadership of the Alzheimer’s Association, the United States is on its way to having a national plan so our country will be prepared to handle this national emergency and advance ourselves toward a cure.”

The Alzheimer’s Association stands with millions of Alzheimer families in urging the President to sign this legislation into law, before January 2011, when the first wave of baby boomers begin turning 65 and face higher risk for developing the fatal, degenerative disease.

Alzheimer’s Association

The Alzheimer’s Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer care, support and research. Our mission is to eliminate Alzheimer’s disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer’s. For more information, visit www.alz.org.

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