



Representative Stephanie Howse  
11<sup>th</sup> House District

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Sponsor Testimony

House Bill 265

Aging and Long Term Care Committee

November 21, 2019

Good Morning,

Chair Ginter, Vice-Chair Swearingen, and members of the Aging and Long Term Care Committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to offer sponsor testimony on House Bill 265 (H.B. 265). House Bill 265 would establish a dementia care certificate issued by the Ohio Department of Aging and Prohibits a person from using titles or acronyms indicating dementia care certification unless the person holds the Department's certificate.

Alzheimer's disease is a growing public health crisis in Ohio. Alzheimer's is a progressive disorder that causes brain cells to waste away (degenerate) and die. This year 2019, 220,000 Ohioans, 65 and older, will be living with Alzheimer's. By 2025, that number is expected to rise to 250,000, a 13.5 percent increase. 600,000 family caregivers bear the burden of the disease in Ohio. Patients are spending premium dollars for quality care but do not always receive premium care due to a lack of knowledge and/or training for caregivers working with Alzheimer's or dementia patients.

For me, this cause is personal, because my mother – Former Representative Annie L. Key, was diagnosed with Mild Cognitive Impairment a few years ago, which developed into dementia. Caring for a person with Alzheimer's or dementia often involves a team of people which includes caregivers. Whether you provide daily caregiving, participate in decision making, or simply care about a person with the disease. From my own personal experience I know there is a need to educate and implement better practices for caregivers of our elderly members suffering from various forms of dementia.

Studies show that those with specialized training develop a much deeper understanding of the disease process and are better equipped to serve as caregivers on a long-term basis. Without training, it's not uncommon for caregivers to become burned out and frustrated which negatively impacts the quality of life for them and the patient.

In addition to best practices in hands-on caregiving, many training programs teach caregivers how to identify when their patient is moving to a different stage of the disease. The ability to identify and anticipate these changes enables caregivers to adjust their approach and makes for smoother

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Committees:

Aging and Long Term Care, Ranking Member  
Finance  
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Transportation and Public Safety

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transitions as the disease progresses. To qualify for a dementia care certificate, an individual must do the following: Submit a completed application to the Department; complete a course of study in dementia care approved by the Department; Pay the Department a fee in the amount specified in Department rules. The training program itself will target: Person-centered training and care planning, including cultural awareness; Social and physical environment characteristics that trigger or exacerbate behavioral symptoms of dementia, Meaningful and engaging activities, evaluating daily living goals, and non-pharmacological intervention.

House Bill 265 is critical legislation to keep our promise that members of our aging community can live, work and retire with safety and security in their golden age.

Thank you, Chairman Ginter, and the Aging and Long Term Care Committee for your attention to this matter.

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