



# OHIO ASSISTED LIVING ASSOCIATION

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www.ohioassistedliving.org

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**Testimony to the Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee on SB 24**

Jean Thompson, Ohio Assisted Living Association (OALA) Director      March 26, 2019

The Honorable Chairman Burke, Vice-Chair Huffman and Ranking Minority Member Antonio and other members of the Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony today. My name is Jean Thompson and I am the Executive Director of the Ohio Assisted Living Association (OALA), representing 540 residential care facility providers, or as they are commonly called, Assisted Living communities in the State of Ohio. Our Association represents the full spectrum of Assisted Living from small to large, individually owned to corporately owned and managed, proprietary and not-for-profit, and from part of a CCRC to free standing.

We support SB 24 as a part of the State’s efforts to learn about and improve the care of Ohioans and their families who are dealing with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias. Our State is facing a new and unique set of issues and challenges as Ohio, and our whole nation, grows older and the prevalence of Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias increases. The Alzheimer’s Association tells us there are 220,000 Ohioans living with Alzheimer’s disease now and nationally over 5 million Americans with a projected increase in Ohio in 2025 to 250,000 and 14 million nationally\*.

The charge of the Taskforce, to be established by SB 24, *is to examine the needs of individuals diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease or related dementias, along with the services available to them in our state and the ability of health care providers and facilities to meet those current and future needs*, is a worthwhile endeavor. Coupling this information with the further request in SB 24 to *identify existing resources, services and capacity related to the care of these individuals*, will provide the State with much needed information and act as a resource moving forward. Our Association wants to be able to contribute to this effort.

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In the past, our Association (OALA) has worked with the State on various Committees and Taskforces evaluating and providing information and perspectives from the Assisted Living vantage point. We have long worked with the Ohio Department of Health in relation to Assisted Living, actively participating on the initial design of regulations with Governor Voinovich and through 5, 5-year regulatory rule reviews. We have provided data and survey information to the Departments of Health, Aging and Medicaid as well. We are knowledgeable of assisted living regulations and general practice and participated in the addition of training requirements for persons with all types of dementias and other special needs in the residential care facility regulations.

Additionally, as the representative association of the largest number of Assisted Living providers in the State, and specialists in the area since 1993, we feel we can bring information and assistance to the important work of this Taskforce relating to Alzheimer's and related dementias.

I would be glad to answer any questions that I can.

Sincerely,

Jean Thompson  
Executive Director

\*[www.alz.org/facts](http://www.alz.org/facts) – Ohio Alzheimers Facts Figures 2019