

**Written Testimony on House Bill 23
Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee
June 15, 2021
Holly Holtzen, State Director, AARP Ohio**

Good morning, Chairman Hoagland, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Thomas, and distinguished Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee members,

My name is Holly Holtzen, and I serve as the State Director for AARP, Ohio. As you are aware, AARP, with 1.5 million members in Ohio, is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, nationwide organization that helps empower people to choose how they live as they age, strengthens communities, and fights for the issues that matter most to families, such as healthcare, employment, and income security, retirement planning, affordable utilities and protection from financial abuse.

AARP is here today to express our strong support for House Bill 23. This bill would develop education and provide dementia training to first responders addressing difficult situations for individuals with dementia. Dementia is one of the costliest chronic diseases in the nation. The total societal cost for dementia care was estimated at \$290 billion in 2018 and projected to increase to \$1.1 trillion by 2050. There are an estimated 220,000 individuals living with Alzheimer's disease and dementia in Ohio, with a projection to see nearly a 20% increase in those living with Alzheimer's and other dementias by 2030. These estimates do not reflect those who are undiagnosed or those with early-onset who are under age 65.

Most people prefer to receive care and services in their homes or the community; however, many families are not equipped to meet the needs of individuals with dementia. The physical and emotional toll of caregiving is enormous. It places people with dementia at risk for abuse and neglect due to caregiving burnout and stress. This bill will help develop and train the peace officers and specified emergency medical service personnel to recognize the key signs of Alzheimer's and related dementia, appropriately interact with persons living with dementia, and how best to intervene in situations where these individuals may be at risk of abuse and neglect.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 23.