



April 3, 2019

Senator Dave Burke
Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee, Chair
Ohio Senate
1 Capitol Square
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Chair Burke, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Antonio, and Members of the Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of Senate Bill 24 (SB 24), a bill that seeks to improve the lives of Ohioans living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementia as well as their caregivers. We thank Senator Wilson and Leader Yuko for championing this legislation. Establishing the Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementia Task Force will help Ohio address a growing public health crisis that affects individuals, families, and communities.

According to the Alzheimer's Association, more than 220,000 Ohioans live with dementia today and we anticipate that number to continue rising. Further, dementia does not just affect Ohio's elders; early onset diagnoses are impacting people in their 40s and 50s. We appreciate the ongoing work of the Alzheimer's Association, both in the continuing search for a cure and in providing critical respite and support to families affected by dementia. We value their dedication and continued partnership.

SB 24 brings together individuals diagnosed with dementia, caregivers, advocates, industry leaders, and Governor DeWine's Administration to examine current and future needs of people living with dementia and their caregivers. The task force will develop, identify, and support best practices and approaches to empower caregivers, and allow Ohioans living with dementia to continue to participate in their families and communities.

The Departments of Aging and Health welcome the opportunity to advance the quality of care and quality of life for individuals living with dementia and their caregivers. We anticipate robust discussions with our constituencies, and we are confident that the work of this proposed legislation will help to make Ohio a better, more welcoming, and accommodating place for people directly and indirectly affected by dementia.

Thank you for your consideration and support of this legislation.

Sincerely,



Ursel J. McElroy
Ohio Department of Aging, Director



Dr. Amy Acton
Ohio Department of Health, Director