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**Informational Hearing: State Plan for Alzheimer's and Related Dementias
in Oregon**

**Submitted to House Committee on Human Services and Housing
By Larisa Kofman, J.D., Public Policy Director, Alzheimer's Association
Oregon Chapter
May 27, 2015**

Chair Keny-Guyer and Members of the Committee:

My name is Larisa Kofman, and I am the Public Policy Director at the Alzheimer's Association Oregon Chapter. I serve as the co-chair of the State Plan for Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias in Oregon (State Plan) Implementation Team. Thank you for holding this Informational Hearing on the State Plan and for your ongoing commitment to addressing Alzheimer's in Oregon.

Today, about 60,000 Oregonians older than 65 are living with Alzheimer's.¹ This equals 10 percent of seniors in the state. Based on data from the 2012 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), one in eight Oregonians older than 45 has reported experiencing confusion or memory loss.² Over 68 percent of them have not talked to a health care professional about it. Further, last year in Oregon, about 175,000 unpaid Alzheimer's and dementia caregivers provided nearly 200 million hours of unpaid care, valued at more than \$2.4 billion.

Released in July 2012, the State Plan established goals and recommendations to address Alzheimer's disease and related dementias statewide in the areas of public awareness and engagement, care quality and access, protection and safety, and research and data. There have been several significant accomplishments, thanks in large part to the ongoing efforts of goal leaders and work group members. Many of the accomplishments are also due to the commitment of state legislators to sustain and increase funding for services and programs for seniors and people with disabilities.

Today, I will highlight achievements and next steps in the area of public awareness and engagement and the other panelists will provide updates on

¹ Alzheimer's Association Oregon Chapter (2015, March). *Oregon Alzheimer's Statistics*. [Fact Sheet]. Retrieved from http://www.alz.org/documents_custom/facts_2015/alz_ff_oregon.pdf?type=interior_map&facts=undefined&facts=facts

² Alzheimer's Association Oregon Chapter (2015, March). *Cognitive Decline in Oregon* [Fact Sheet].

other State Plan goals.³ We have made some significant accomplishments due to a combination of federal and state funds to reach our goal in the area of public awareness and engagement. In 2013, Oregon received a three-year grant (September 30, 2013–September 29, 2016) from the Alzheimer’s Disease Supportive Services Program of the Administration for Community Living (ACL). The state contributed matching funds in the amount of \$291,077. Thanks to the ACL funding, we were able to accomplish one of our public awareness goal recommendations by creating a website that provides a single entry point to existing information and resources on Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias. The website launched in May 2014 as a subsection of the revamped Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) website. The site’s unique URL — helpforalz.org — makes it easy for people to find.

In addition, dementia-specific training was provided to the ADRC staff to help increase expertise and understanding. As of March 31, 2015, 335 staff members statewide completed core modules of the training. Close to 100 percent of ADRC staff members will be trained by the end of the three-year grant period to identify cases of potential dementia and provide dementia-capable information and assistance to consumers. In addition to the ACL grant funding, during the 2013 and 2014 legislative sessions, legislators supported funding that increased the number of ADRC options counselors, which provided more information resources for Oregonians affected by Alzheimer’s.

Further, because of a change in the senior medical deduction, state legislators were also able to allocate \$3.3 million in funding for caregiver and first-responder training throughout the state. Oregon Care Partners (OCP) received a contract pursuant to the Department of Human Services (DHS) Aging and People with Disabilities (APD) Caregiver Training Initiative, commencing on August 14, 2014, and running through June 20, 2015. To-date, nearly 4,000 OCP classes have been completed.

In addition to OCP’s trainings and education offerings, the Alzheimer’s Association provided 143 education programs (geared toward the general public, individuals diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease and their families, and health care and social service professionals) to 1,800 participants.

To meet the State Plan goal, we also developed a comprehensive catalog of caregiver trainings and a report analyzing current caregiver training, which was published in June 2014. The report provides recommendations, including better promotion of existing trainings, expanding respite and adult day service availability and greater use of technology.

There have been many accomplishments in a range of areas, as you will hear more about from other panel members. Work still needs to be done, however. We ask for your continued support in funding services and programs for seniors and people with disabilities because they are essential to meeting the goals in our State Plan. In addition, we also ask for a continued investment of \$3.3 million for caregiver and first-responder training, as well as investments in all the areas supported by the Campaign for Oregon Seniors and People with Disabilities.

³ Please see the full update report on all of the goals and recommendations.