

Enrolled

House Joint Memorial 4

Sponsored by Representative KENY-GUYER, Senators MONNES ANDERSON, KNOPP; Representatives BARKER, BARNHART, DOHERTY, GOMBERG, HAYDEN, KENNEMER, MCKEOWN, PARRISH, SMITH WARNER (Presession filed.)

To the President of the United States and the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled:

We, your memorialists, the Seventy-ninth Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon, in legislative session assembled, respectfully represent as follows:

Whereas family caregivers, by performing daily tasks as wide-ranging as meal preparation and medical care management, are vital to enabling older adults and persons with disabilities to remain living in their homes and communities; and

Whereas there are approximately 469,000 family caregivers in Oregon; and

Whereas family caregivers in this state annually provide an estimated 437 million hours of unpaid care, at an economic value of \$5.7 billion; and

Whereas providing care to a loved one creates a financial burden on family caregivers, with the average caregiver spending \$6,954 per year in out-of-pocket costs, nearly 20 percent of the caregiver's income; and

Whereas low-income family caregivers suffer a heavier financial blow, spending, on average, amounts that approach 45 percent of their income; and

Whereas further financial strains associated with family caregiving arise from such factors as needing to cut back on hours at work, take unpaid leave, retire early or even quit a job; and

Whereas many family caregivers report that caregiving has caused them to resort to adverse financial strategies, such as withdrawing savings, cutting back on personal spending, decreasing contributions for retirement and taking out loans, to make ends meet; and

Whereas nearly 40 percent of family caregivers feel their caregiving situation is highly stressful; and

Whereas the emotional toll rises as the amount and duration of care, the performance of medical or nursing duties and the perceived lack of choice in taking on the caregiver role increase; and

Whereas chronic stress caused by family caregiving may have negative health impacts for the caregiver, including depression, psychological distress, decreased self-care and poorer physical health; and

Whereas in the workplace, family caregivers often face losing earnings, job security, promotions, health insurance and employer retirement contributions; and

Whereas for employers, annual costs associated with family caregivers without adequate support average \$2,110 per full-time working caregiver, due to absenteeism, employee replacement, workday distractions and related issues; and

Whereas respite care is temporary, short-term care that provides relief from the intense demands put on family caregivers; and

Whereas research demonstrates that respite care reduces the stresses of family caregiving and improves well-being for both the giver and receiver of care; and

Whereas caregiver training, respite care and other supports are powerful tools that make an intensely difficult job easier and enable family caregivers to carry on with their responsibilities, prevent burnout and injury, better manage the variety of duties in their charge and provide the best care possible to their loved ones; and

Whereas the Oregon Caregiver Respite Work Group, formed to learn ways to support this state's family caregivers, has advanced a goal of fostering stronger infrastructure for respite care that will serve the needs of family caregivers and the persons to whom they provide care; and

Whereas the Oregon Caregiver Respite Work Group has developed a set of recommendations for improving education and awareness, increasing the supply of respite providers and making respite services more affordable; and

Whereas in addition to Medicaid, Oregon has two major programs, the federally funded Family Caregiver Support Program and the state-funded Oregon Project Independence, in place to provide respite and support services to caregivers; and

Whereas demand for these programs is high, but funding is limited, and more needs to be done to improve the plight of family caregivers; and

Whereas the federal Recognize, Assist, Include, Support, and Engage (RAISE) Family Caregivers Act would direct the United States Secretary of Health and Human Services to develop, maintain and update a National Family Caregiving Strategy that would bring together the public and private sectors to recognize family caregivers, coordinate information and identify actions that can be taken to address training, respite options, workplace time-off, out-of-pocket costs, balance of workplace and caregiving demands and other issues associated with family caregiving; now, therefore,

Be It Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon:

That we, the members of the Seventy-ninth Legislative Assembly, recognize the compassionate and difficult work done by family caregivers in Oregon and throughout the United States and appreciate the efforts of the Oregon Caregiver Respite Work Group and will consider the recommendations presented; and be it further

Resolved, That we respectfully urge the Congress of the United States to pass, and the President to sign, the RAISE Family Caregiver Act as a bipartisan approach to creating a National Family Caregiving Strategy; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this memorial be sent to the President of the United States, to the Senate Majority Leader, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and to each member of the Oregon Congressional Delegation.

Adopted by House February 8, 2017

Timothy G. Sekerak, Chief Clerk of House

Tina Kotek, Speaker of House

Adopted by Senate April 27, 2017

Peter Courtney, President of Senate