



March 6, 2025

Chair Hartman, Vice Chairs Nguyen and Scharf, and Members of the House Committee on Early Childhood and Human services:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and testimony on HB 3497, the bill that would create the Shared Future Oregon Task Force. The Alzheimer's Association supports the concepts contained in the proposed legislation and appreciates the goal to bring diverse interests together to develop a long-term multisector plan on aging. The proposed Task Force represents a coordinated attempt to address the opportunities and challenges that come with Oregon's aging population and thoughtfully prepare for the changes that this demographic shift will bring.

The Alzheimer's Association is hopeful that in addition to the important focus on healthy aging, the Task Force will also focus on long-term and chronic conditions that more often develop in older Oregonians, including dementia.

In Oregon:

- 79,000 people aged 65 and older are living with Alzheimer's in Oregon.
- 9.5% of people aged 45 and older have subjective cognitive decline.
- 170,000 family caregivers bear the burden of the disease in Oregon.
- 229 million hours of unpaid care provided by Alzheimer's caregivers.
- \$5.2 billion is the value of the unpaid care.
- \$317 million is the cost of Alzheimer's to the state Medicaid program.

These numbers show that a public health approach is necessary to lessen the burden and enhance the quality of life for those living with cognitive impairment and their families. And significantly for the focus of the proposed Task Force, this is just one age-related chronic condition – there are obviously many others.



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The impact of unpaid caregiving on the Oregon economy should be an important consideration for the Task Force, particularly as many of the caregivers would otherwise be able to participate more fully in the workforce. The Alzheimer's Association hopes that the proposed Task Force would specifically include voices and perspectives from caregivers and organizations that work with Oregonians who are experiencing chronic conditions to better prepare our communities. Even healthy aging may trigger unavoidable chronic conditions that require caregiving, life modifications, and specific planning.

While the Association supports the broad intent of HB 3497, the Association would applaud increased clarity around a seat on the Task Force for caregivers and for organizations serving older Oregonians who are impacted by age-related diseases and conditions.

Thank you for your consideration,
Jenna App
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