

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 15, 2011

The Honorable Joseph Deiss
President United Nations General Assembly
Room NL-2082
United Nations
New York, NY 10017

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you for holding this week's hearing in anticipation of the United Nations Summit on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) this September. As members of the Bipartisan, Bicameral Alzheimer's Taskforce in the United States Congress, we are writing to urge you and your colleagues to include Alzheimer's disease and other dementias on the list of diseases to be discussed during the NCD Summit and thereby recognize the rapidly escalating global health epidemic posed by these diseases.

In less than one generation, there will be, for the first time, more people across the globe who are older than 60 years of age than are younger than 15. This means that while today more than 36 million people around the world are suffering and dying from dementias, by 2050 this number is projected to more than triple to 115 million. Although the majority of identified Alzheimer's patients currently live in developed countries, the disease is expected to acutely impact rapidly developing and highly populated countries like China, India, and Brazil.

Not only is Alzheimer's disease a public health crisis, it is also a fiscal one. Already, several nations are feeling the heavy financial burden of caring for seniors with this devastating disease. Alzheimer's patients often require individual and consent care adding an incredible load to families, business, physicians and hospitals. In the United States, for example, healthcare for residents with Alzheimer's disease can cost more than three times as much as healthcare for seniors without it.

As populations age, this burden will only grow, and nations will be forced to pay for expensive care for over 100 million patients. The global cost of Alzheimer's and related dementias exceeded \$600 billion last year alone – one percent of the entire world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Given this current and looming problem, the UN Summit cannot afford to neglect Alzheimer's and dementias. Several governments have identified this threat and are beginning to work together and plan accordingly.

We are proud that last year the United States passed the National Alzheimer's Project Act (NAPA). This groundbreaking legislation requires the US government to create a plan to coordinate and accelerate Alzheimer's research and care. It is our belief that we must prepare now if we are going to successfully care for our nation's seniors in the future.

Additionally, in the coming weeks a subcommittee of the United States Congress is scheduled to convene the first ever hearing focused on Alzheimer's as a global pandemic. The hearing will explore solutions for addressing this threat. Likewise, by acknowledging this global crisis and bringing experts together on this issue, the United Nations has the unique opportunity to capitalize on this increasing momentum and take this issue to a global level.

As you prepare for the Summit, we hope you will amend the NCD Summit agenda so that Alzheimer's disease and related dementias are properly addressed and included in all conversations.

Specifically, we hope the Summit will make recommendations to the global community regarding increased cooperation in Alzheimer's disease research, diagnostics, and therapies as well as ways to facilitate the exchange of information in order to develop best practices in comprehensive care to reduce costs for governments and provide support for patients and caregivers.

It is imperative the global community recognize the current and oncoming public health crisis posed by Alzheimer's disease. As leaders we must work together to develop necessary plans to address this threat.

The United Nations can help facilitate a global response, of necessary size and scale, by amending the agenda for the NCD Summit to include Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

We thank you and look forward to your response on this issue.

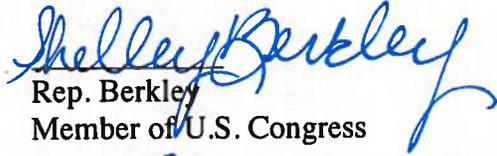
Sincerely,


Rep. Markey
Member of U.S. Congress
Co-Chair, Alzheimer's Taskforce

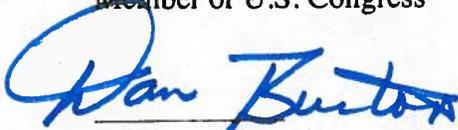

Rep. Smith
Member of U.S. Congress
Co-Chair, Alzheimer's Taskforce



Rep. Waxman
Member of U.S. Congress



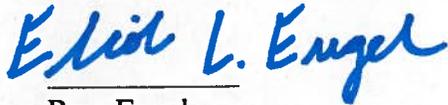
Rep. Berkley
Member of U.S. Congress



Rep. Burton
Member of U.S. Congress



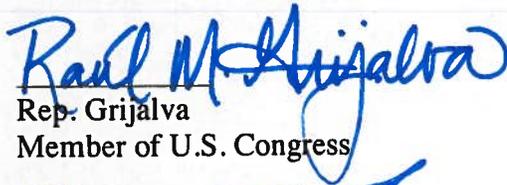
Rep. Carter
Member of U.S. Congress



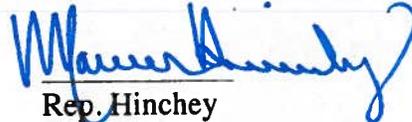
Rep. Engel
Member of U.S. Congress



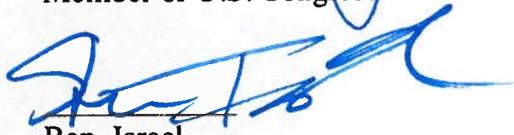
Rep. Frank
Member of U.S. Congress



Rep. Grijalva
Member of U.S. Congress



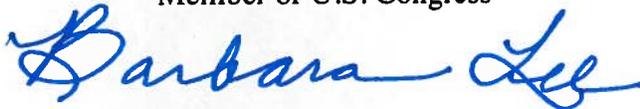
Rep. Hinchey
Member of U.S. Congress



Rep. Israel
Member of U.S. Congress



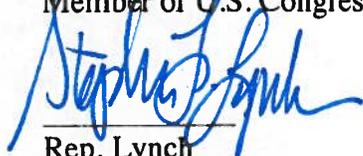
Rep. LaTourette
Member of U.S. Congress



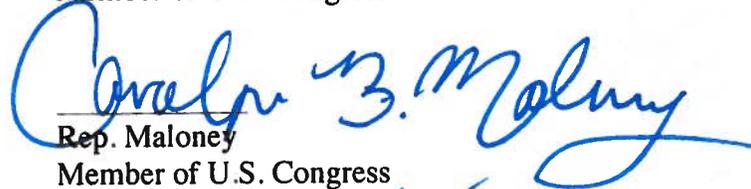
Rep. Lee
Member of U.S. Congress



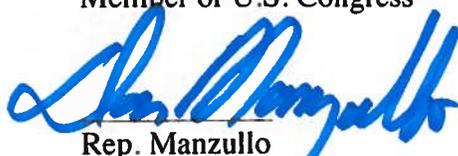
Rep. Lewis
Member of U.S. Congress



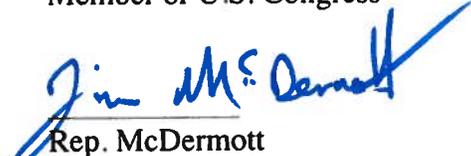
Rep. Lynch
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Rep. Maloney
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Rep. Manzullo
Member of U.S. Congress



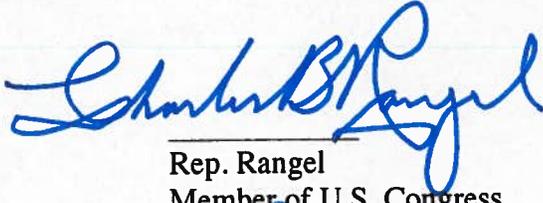
Rep. McDermott
Member of U.S. Congress

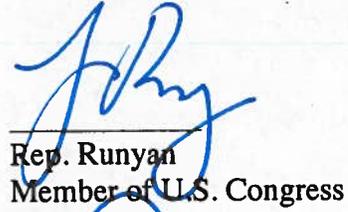


Rep. Norton
Member of U.S. Congress

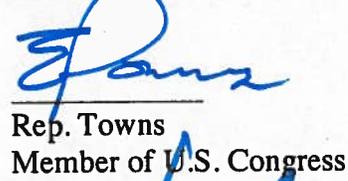


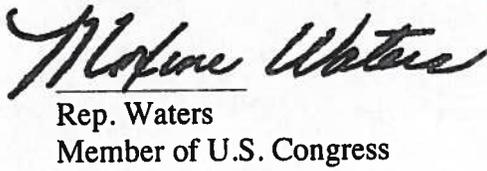
Rep. Olver
Member of U.S. Congress

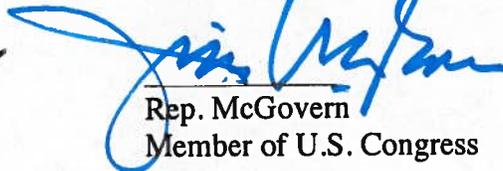

Rep. Rangel
Member of U.S. Congress


Rep. Runyan
Member of U.S. Congress

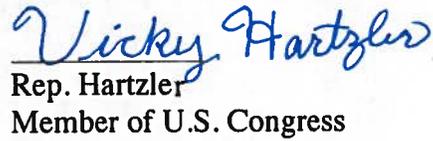

Rep. Schiff
Member of U.S. Congress


Rep. Towns
Member of U.S. Congress


Rep. Waters
Member of U.S. Congress


Rep. McGovern
Member of U.S. Congress


Rep. Carson
Member of U.S. Congress


Rep. Hartzler
Member of U.S. Congress

Cc: Ambassador Susan E. Rice, Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary Hillary Clinton