July 29, 2015

The Honorable Susan Collins
United States Senate
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
United States Senate
717 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Collins and Senator Baldwin:

Thank you for your efforts to work on a bipartisan basis to support family caregivers. We, the undersigned, write in support of the Recognize, Assist, Include, Support, and Engage (RAISE) Family Caregivers Act (S. 1719).

Family caregivers are the backbone of services and supports in this country. They help make it possible for older adults and people with disabilities to live independently in their homes and communities. In 2013, about 40 million family caregivers provided unpaid care valued at about $470 billion to adults who needed help with daily activities, more than total Medicaid spending that year. About 3.7 million family caregivers provide care to a child under age 18 because of a medical, behavioral, or other condition or disability. Our country relies on the contributions family caregivers make and should recognize and support them.

The RAISE Family Caregivers Act would implement the federal Commission on Long-Term Care's bipartisan recommendation that Congress require the development of a national strategy to support family caregivers. The bill would create an advisory body to bring together relevant federal agencies and others from the private and public sectors to advise and make recommendations. The strategy would identify specific actions that government, communities, providers, employers, and others can take to recognize and support family caregivers and be updated annually.

By supporting family caregivers, we can help people live at home where they want to be, helping to delay or prevent more costly care and unnecessary hospitalizations, saving taxpayer dollars. We appreciate your bipartisan leadership and are committed to working with you to pass the RAISE Family Caregivers Act.

Sincerely,

AARP
Advance CLASS
Alzheimer's Association
Alzheimer's Foundation of America
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Association on Health and Disability
American Geriatrics Society
American Health Care Association
American Heart Association/American Stroke Association
American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR)

American Society on Aging
America's Health Insurance Plans
Association of University Centers on Disabilities
Autism Speaks
Caregiver Action Network
Caring Across Generations
Center for Elder Care and Advanced Illness, Altarum Institute
Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation
Coalition to Transform Advanced Care
Easter Seals
Family Caregiver Alliance, National Center on Caregiving
Genworth Financial
Justice in Aging (formerly National Senior Citizens Law Center)
Lakeshore Foundation
LeadingAge
Lutheran Services in America
Lutheran Services in America Disability Network
Medicare Rights Center
National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys
National Adult Day Services Association (NADSA)
National Alliance for Caregiving
National Association for Home Care & Hospice
National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a)
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association of Social Workers (NASW)
National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare
National Council on Aging
National Hispanic Council on Aging
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
National Respite Coalition
Oral Health America (OHA)
OWL -The Voice of Women 40+
Paralyzed Veterans of America
PHI (Paraprofessional Healthcare Institute)
Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving
Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE)
The Arc
The Elizabeth Dole Foundation
The Jewish Federations of North America