



Leadership Council of Aging Organizations

Max Richtman, Chair

October 27, 2015

The Honorable Mark Warner
United States Senate
475 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Johnny Isakson
United States Senate
131 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Warner and Isakson:

The Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO) is a coalition of 72 national nonprofit organizations concerned with the well-being of America's older population and committed to representing their interests in the policy-making arena.

We are writing in strong support of S. 1549, the "Care Planning Act of 2015" and your steadfast efforts to ensure that older adults living with advanced illness or nearing the end-of-life receive person- and family-centered care that is well coordinated and honors their dignity, values, and health care choices at each stage of their illness. Older adults must have access to the full range of high-quality medical care and treatment, including curative care, palliative care, and hospice care, and we believe that your legislation will help move us toward this goal.

Last year, LCAO adopted Advanced Care, Hospice, and End-of-Life Principles (attached), which are well-reflected in the key provisions of the "Care Planning Act." Of paramount importance to our members is care that reflects the goals, values, and preferences of the person. By creating a benefit under Medicare for planning services, beneficiaries will have the greatly needed option of working with a multidisciplinary team to consider the range of treatment options and define the care plan they want to address their physical, medical, and psychosocial needs. Research clearly shows that persons with advanced illness and their families benefit from a series of informed discussions over time about their goals and care options, and your bill will provide the opportunity for these valuable discussions to take place. Further, we support the bill's provisions that direct hospitals, home health agencies, hospices, and skilled nursing facilities to ensure patient preferences are documented and shared with other providers.

We also support the legislation's coordinated services demonstration project, its direction to the Secretary of Health and Human Services to address the gaps in quality measurement in the advanced illness field, and the inclusion of advanced care planning information in the Medicare & You handbook.

LCAO looks forward to working with you as the "Care Planning Act of 2015" moves through the legislative process and would like to discuss various aspects of the bill with your staff in the

near future. Thank you for your leadership on this issue. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Brian Lindberg, brian@consumers.org.

Sincerely,

AARP

Aging Life Care Association

Alzheimer's Association

Alzheimer's Foundation of America

American Geriatrics Society

American Society on Aging

Asociacion Nacional Pro Personas Mayores (National Association for Hispanic Elderly)

Association for Gerontology and Human Development
in Historically Black Colleges & Universities

Caring Across Generations

Center for Elder Care and Advanced Illness - Altarum Institute

Center for Medicare Advocacy, Inc.

Compassion & Choices

The Gerontological Society of America

The Jewish Federations of North America

Justice in Aging

Leading Age

National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys

National Adult Protective Services Association

National Alliance for Caregiving

National Association for Home Care & Hospice

National Association of Area Agencies on Aging

National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs

National Association of Retired and Senior Volunteer Program Directors, Inc.

National Association of State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs

National Center for Creative Aging

National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare

The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care

National Council on Aging

National Osteoporosis Foundation

National Senior Corps Association

OWL-The Voice of Women 40+

Visiting Nurse Associations of America

Women's Institute for a Secure Retirement