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Candidates Must Prioritize Alzheimer's Disease in Appeal to Voters

New Survey Shows Americans Want Elected Officials to Support Alzheimer's Now

WASHINGTON, D.C., October 13th, 2015 – A candidate's relatability to voters and ability to understand the challenges they face make or break elections. Millions of American voters have had personal experience with Alzheimer's disease and understand the dramatic toll the disease takes on families across the country. As a result, according to a nationwide survey by the Alzheimer's Association, voters view Alzheimer's disease as a significant political priority for the 2016 congressional and presidential elections. The nationwide voter survey indicates that:

1. **73 million voters have had a family member** or close friend with Alzheimer's disease
2. **More than one-third, or 52 million American voters have provided care** or personal assistance to a relative, friend or neighbor with Alzheimer's
3. **82 percent of voters nationwide are concerned about Alzheimer's disease**
4. **87 percent of voters feel unprepared or only somewhat prepared** to meet care needs of a family member who develops Alzheimer's disease
5. **The majority, 64 percent, of voters would be more likely to vote for a presidential candidate** who has pledged to support a major national research effort to fight Alzheimer's

"The survey findings indicate that 73 million American voters know someone with Alzheimer's disease, so it's not surprising that the majority of voters expect our government to make Alzheimer's research and care a priority," said Robert Egge, chief public policy officer and executive vice president of government affairs, Alzheimer's Association. "As presidential and congressional candidates look toward 2016, they should understand that voters want to know that they plan to address the Alzheimer's disease and, specifically, what actions they intend to take when it comes to this mounting health crisis."

Issues important to voters can be controversial but urgently addressing the Alzheimer's crisis is not. Alzheimer's disease is an important voter issue that is not controversial for any candidate. All candidates know this is a critical challenge to face; how they will differ is in their approach and plan to quickly address this already enormous and mounting health crisis.

Presidential and congressional candidates, both Republicans and Democrats, have already begun to discuss the Alzheimer's disease crisis while campaigning. As Alzheimer's crosses political

lines, American voters are recognizing the disease as an issue that must be proactively addressed by those they are considering for office.

“Prioritizing Alzheimer’s disease research funding is smart politics for a very important reason,” said Egge. “Americans understand it’s the only way to change the deadly and expensive trajectory that is bearing down on so many American families.”

Alzheimer's is already America's most expensive disease, [costing](#) the country more each year than cancer or heart disease. Alzheimer’s disease also remains the only cause of death among the nation’s top 10 that cannot be prevented, cured, or even slowed.

Today, Medicare spends nearly one in five dollars on people with Alzheimer’s but, by midcentury; the government will spend nearly one in three dollars on the disease, which encompasses 31 percent of Medicare's budget, a nearly twofold increase. The latest [research](#) reveals more than 28 million baby boomers are expected to develop Alzheimer’s between now and midcentury, dramatically increasing already overwhelming costs further—for both voters and the government.

For more information about the voter survey, visit alz.org/survey.

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Alzheimer’s Association®

The Alzheimer’s Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support and research. Our mission is to eliminate Alzheimer’s disease through the advancement of research, to provide and enhance care and support for all affected, and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer’s. For more information, visit alz.org.