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Gov. DeWine Signs Legislation to Create a State Plan for Alzheimer's

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COLUMBUS, OH – Following an uncontested approval by the Ohio General Assembly, Gov. Mike DeWine Wednesday officially signed into law legislation that will help the state confront the sweeping economic and social impact of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

Introduced by co-sponsors State Sen. Steve Wilson (R-Maineville) and Ohio Senate Minority Leader Kenny Yuko (D-Richmond Heights), Senate Bill 24 calls for the creation of a process that will lead to an official plan of action to address Alzheimer's disease and related dementias in Ohio. Among the issues the Alzheimer's plan will address include the importance of early detection and diagnosis, resources for caregiver support, quality of care and safety.

"We have taken an important step on our journey to end Alzheimer's. I'm grateful for the many advocates, caregivers and leaders who made this task force a priority. I'm eager to get to work so we can improve the lives of the one million Ohioans who are impacted by Alzheimer's or dementia, and their families," Senator Yuko said.

Nancy Udelson, Cleveland Area Chapter president and CEO, said, "On behalf of the thousands of Cleveland-area families and individuals affected by Alzheimer's and other dementia, we applaud Governor DeWine for moving Ohio in the right direction. We look forward to seeing the Task Force's recommendations."

Currently 220,000 Ohioans live with Alzheimer's, a fatal progressive brain disease with no known cure, effective treatment or way to slow its progression. For each person with Alzheimer's, there are 2-3 caregivers - making an estimated 1 million Ohioans directly affected by the disease. By 2025, an estimated 250,000 Ohioans aged 65 and over will be diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease – a 13.6 percent increase. Last year, Medicaid costs associated with Alzheimer's stood at a staggering \$2.36 billion.

“Alzheimer's is not just an aging issue, it's a public health issue, and Ohio is moving forward to combat the disease,” said Trey Addison, state public policy director of the Alzheimer's Association. “It's truly fitting that Gov. DeWine's action comes in November, which happens to be National Family Caregiver Month and National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month. We applaud the Governor and the General Assembly for moving this important work forward.”

Until now, Ohio was the only state in the nation without a formal process to create an Alzheimer's plan.

The planning process calls for the creation of a governor-appointed task force that will include Alzheimer's caregivers, affected individuals, physicians, representatives of residential care, adult-day, hospitals and long-term care facilities, aging services as well as select members of the General Assembly and the Ohio Department of Aging.

To connect with the Alzheimer's Association visit alz.org or call the 24/7 Helpline at 800.272.3900.

About the Alzheimer's Association®

The Alzheimer's Association is the world's 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 on the Alzheimer's Association, call (800) 272-3900, or visit alz.org.

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