

Written Testimony for Human Services Committee-March 3, 2009

Good Morning Senator Doyle, Representative Walker and distinguished members of the Human Service Committee. I am Teresa Hall and am writing to you on behalf of myself and my mother Agnes DelGiudice.

I am writing to support Raised Bill 989-An Act Concerning the Alzheimer's Respite Care Program

My mother has been the primary caregiver of my father for the last seven years. He is now 83 years and in the late stages of Alzheimer's disease. She is now 75 years old and has given up her precious golden years, her hobbies, her health and her livelihood to provide the care my father requires. We struggled with several home care agencies and found out the hard way that are so many unqualified/untrained healthcare employees that really cannot handle or understand the extensive care, burden and frustration that comes along with caring for an Alzheimer's patient. Being exhausted and depressed myself, with not being able to help my mother more with my father's care, I turned to the Alzheimer's Association for advice. On that day we learned about the respite fund. Once the fund became available for my mother, we looked into several options and decided we would try Adult Day Care three times a week for my Dad. The Adult Day Care has been a God Send for us. The respite fund helped us finance a small portion of the enormous amount of cost we are financing for my father's care and medications. We would love to be able to take him there for four or five days a week. However, given today's economic conditions, the cost of living increase and the fact that Medicare or insurance does not cover anything for this long devastating disease, we are not able to do this. This is why we urge you to consider the proposed concept of regulations to provide up to \$7500 in special situations and help the caregivers get a little more support which they so much need when caring for a sick loved one. The time my father spends at Adult Day Care, gives my mother some time to rest and recharge for a short while. For her these means taking a breather, a chance to just sit, run an errand or enjoy a cup of coffee.

We are thankful for this fund and as caregivers we strongly urge you to support the increase concerning the Alzheimer's Respite Care.

Sincerely,

Teresa Hall