

**TESTIMONY  
Of  
Michael K. Tobin  
Before the Appropriations Committee  
Of The  
Connecticut General Assembly**

**February 17, 2012**

Chairpersons Senator Toni Harp and Representative Toni Walker and Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is Michael Tobin. I am here today to testify in support of the Alzheimer's Respite Program and ask that you not cut funding to this vital program.

The focus of my testimony will address a lesser acknowledged impact of dementia, that of Younger Onset Alzheimer's. This aspect of the disease affects persons ages 45 to 65, and the effects of this form carry a different burden to a family dynamic. The scenario may involve two working spouses, as well as minor children. This form of dementia is genetic, with the dominant gene passed on through generations at a 50% risk, and usually comprises around 10% of the total cases.

I speak from personal experience, as my wife was diagnosed with Younger Onset in 2004. (Age 49, passing away in 2008 at age 53) My two sons were age 10 at the time of the diagnosis.

This was being compounded by issues of who would care for my wife during my working hours. At the time, her case was monitored by the Adler Geriatric Center at Yale-New Haven Hospital. During my consultation with a Case Manager, I was made aware of the respite grants, at which time it was suggested that applications be submitted.

Minimal grants were received, and my wife was able to go into adult day care for 5 days a week at the Goodwin Levine Adult Day Care in New Haven allowing us to delay nursing home care for this progressive disease. The Respite Care Program also allowed me to keep working, while keeping her stimulated and provide relief from the stress of caring for her during the daytime hours.

Thank you for listening to my story and supporting the Respite Care Program, and for the opportunity to testify before you this evening. I would be happy to answer any questions at this time. Please feel free to contact me at any time with any future concerns or questions.

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