TESTIMONY ON THE ALZHEIMER'S RESPITE PROGRAM

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Everyone can relate to how one feels when you are in need of time off from work or a night out away from the children. Anticipating some time off from work or night out away from the children can give you additional energies to handle the stress at work or the demands of the children.

Now think of a caregiver, a stressful and demanding job, with little time for themselves. The Alzheimer's Respite Program offers caregivers that much needed time off. They are comforted and relieved in knowing there is something out there that can give them relief with some time away from the stresses and demands of caregiving. Upon returning from this short respite the caregivers return feeling more renewed and refreshed ready to handle their responsibilities of the care of their loved one.

It seems to me that cutting the funds for the Alzheimer's Respite Program takes away the much needed assistance caregivers need to do their jobs effectively. The Program enables many Alzheimer's patients to stay in their home longer and thus keeping the costs of care down and delaying or eliminating a nursing home admission.

I was a caregiver for my mother, fifteen years ago, and when she would be at Jefferson House Adult Daycare it would give me such a feeling of relief knowing that she was being cared for and was safe. It gave me the ability to work with peace of mind. It prolonged her stay at home and also gave her a chance to interact with others.

Please consider the importance of the Alzheimer's Respite Program and I ask that you please not cut funding. There are many hardworking caregivers out there that need this program so they can continue to care for their loved ones at home. It offers caregivers a lifeline.