

**TESTIMONY FOR PUBLIC HEARING**

**PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE**

**FEBRUARY 20, 2013**

RICHARD S. FISHER  
32 WEST LANE  
STAMFORD, CT 06905

RE: Proposed Bill No. 5979—AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE ON ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE.

Good Afternoon Members of the Public Health Committee. My name is Richard Fisher and I am an attorney in Stamford, Connecticut working mainly in the elder law and estate field. I am also a member of the Board of Directors of the Connecticut Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association and I am chairman of the Public Policy Committee. As you know, or as I hope you have heard, there are 70,000 people living with Alzheimer's Disease in Connecticut at this time. During the year 2025, just 12 years from now, it is estimated that the number of people age 65 and older with Alzheimer's will be 76,000 or a 9% increase. During 2009 there were approximately 63,000 nursing home residents in Connecticut, 36% of whom had severe to moderate cognitive impairment and 25% of whom had mild cognitive impairment. Since Alzheimer's can sometimes take years before it is diagnosed, the figure of 76,000 could be substantially more.

I am here as both an individual, having had a grandmother and an aunt die from Alzheimer's, and representing the volunteers who work with and for the Connecticut Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association, to ask that you raise Proposed Bill No. 5979 for the following reasons. The people of Connecticut need a plan to address the challenges of Alzheimer's Disease and

related dementia for the present generation and future generations. The goals of the task force in developing a plan might be as follows:

1. Assess the current and future impact of Alzheimer's Disease and related dementia on Connecticut residents.
2. Examine the existing services and resources addressing the needs of persons with dementia, their families and their caregivers.
3. Develop recommendations to respond to the escalating public health crisis caused by the increase in people with Alzheimer's.

The state plan does not necessarily call for spending more money but instead will improve communication and efficiency between groups that serve Alzheimer's patients, their families and caregivers.

In 2011 Congress passed, and the President signed, the National Alzheimer's Project Act (NAPA) which establishes federal priorities with strong public health elements, recommendations that engage the resources of the public health community and leverage its network. At this time, 23 states have adopted an Alzheimer's State Plan with another 13 states and the District of Columbia in the process of writing such plans.

On behalf of those residents of Connecticut who have been diagnosed with Alzheimer's, their families, caregivers and all of us who may one day suffer from that terrible loss of memory, I and the Alzheimer's Association would appreciate your support in raising this bill and eventually forming the task force.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

