

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 167

By Watson

A RESOLUTION to recognize and honor all Tennesseans affected by Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

WHEREAS, Alzheimer's disease is a fatal, degenerative disease of the brain that impairs cognitive function, memory, and behavior; and

WHEREAS, this disease is not a normal part of the aging process; and

WHEREAS, Alzheimer's disease is the sixth-leading cause of death in the United States, and the fifth-leading cause of death for those who are 65 years of age and older; and

WHEREAS, more than five million people in this nation have Alzheimer's disease, including approximately 110,000 Tennesseans; and

WHEREAS, the total cost of care nationally for individuals with Alzheimer's disease is expected to soar from \$214 billion in 2014 to \$1.2 trillion in 2050; and

WHEREAS, nationally, average per-person Medicaid spending for seniors with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias is nineteen times higher than average per-person Medicaid spending for all other seniors; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee has the fifth-highest Alzheimer's death rate in America; from 2000 to 2010, the Alzheimer's death rate in Tennessee increased by 138 percent; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, some 418,000 family caregivers in Tennessee provided 476 million hours of unpaid Alzheimer's care, valued at \$5.9 billion; and

WHEREAS, nearly seventy percent of Tennessee seniors who reported experiencing confusion or memory loss that is occurring more frequently or increasing in intensity have not talked with a healthcare professional about it; and

WHEREAS, fifty-seven percent of Tennessee seniors with memory problems report that those problems create difficulty and burden in their daily lives; and

WHEREAS, Alzheimer's disease takes a tremendous emotional toll on all whose lives it touches, including family members, friends, and especially the caregivers of those living with Alzheimer's disease; and

WHEREAS, fifty-nine percent of family caregivers who attend to loved ones with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias rate the emotional stress of caregiving as high or very high; and

WHEREAS, in 2007, this General Assembly established the Tennessee Alzheimer's Disease Task Force, which was composed of membership from the General Assembly, as well as statutorily defined representatives from interested community and industry partners; and

WHEREAS, the task force, in accordance with its legislative charge, accomplished its numerous goals, including to assess the current and future impact of Alzheimer's disease on Tennesseans; examine the existing industries, services, and resources addressing the needs of persons with Alzheimer's, their families, and caregivers; develop a strategy to mobilize a State response to Alzheimer's; hold public meetings and utilize technological means to gather feedback from persons and families affected by Alzheimer's; and submit a report of findings and recommendations to the General Assembly and the governor in the form of a State Alzheimer's plan in February 2009; and

WHEREAS, recommendations from the Tennessee Alzheimer's Disease Task Force Final Report covered the following five areas: infrastructure, data collection, education and training, services and facilities, and health coverage and funding; and

WHEREAS, we applaud the efforts and results of the Tennessee Alzheimer's Disease Task Force and their State Alzheimer's plan; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby recognize and honor all Tennesseans who bravely battle Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, while we commend their loved ones and caregivers

for demonstrating seemingly infinite courage, devotion, and selflessness throughout the course of this devastating illness.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.