

## Tillis Co-Sponsored Legislation to Combat Alzheimer's Signed Into Law

By Donna Martinez

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Bipartisan legislation co-sponsored by Senator Thom Tillis (R-NC) that would, for the first time, create a public health infrastructure across the country to combat Alzheimer's disease and preserve brain health was signed into law by President Trump.

"Successfully getting this legislation signed into law has a deep personal meaning for me, as I was a caregiver for my grandmother during her battle with Alzheimer's disease," **said Senator Tillis**. "The **BOLD** Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Act will create the framework necessary to preserve brain health for millions of Americans, and I am proud to be a part of the fight to combat, and hopefully one day end, this terrible disease."

More than five million Americans are living with Alzheimer's, and the United States spends more than \$277 billion per year, including \$186 billion in costs to Medicare and Medicaid. In North Carolina, more than 170,000 people are living with the disease, and over 466,000 family members and friends are providing care. Without further action, the number of Americans with Alzheimer's is expected to triple to as many as 14 million by 2050, costing the nation more than \$1.1 trillion per year.

The *Building Our Largest Dementia (BOLD) Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Act* will apply a public health approach to reduce risk, detect early symptoms, advance care, improve data, and ultimately change the trajectory of this devastating disease. Headed by the Centers for Disease and Prevention (CDC), it will authorize \$20 million annually over the next five years to establish:

- Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias Public Health Centers of Excellence dedicated to promoting effective Alzheimer's disease and caregiving interventions as well as educating the public on Alzheimer's disease, cognitive decline, and brain health. The centers would implement the CDC's Healthy Aging Public Health Road Map, and would take key steps to support health and social services professionals as well as families and communities.
- Cooperative Agreements with the CDC that would be awarded to State Health Departments to help them meet local needs in promoting brain health, reducing risk of cognitive decline, improving care for those with Alzheimer's, and other key public health activities.
- Data Grants to improve the analysis and timely reporting of data on Alzheimer's,

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cognitive decline, caregiving, and health disparities at the state and national levels.

The *BOLD Act* is supported by 183 organizations and individuals, including the Alzheimer's Association, Alzheimer's Impact Movement, and Maria Shriver, founder of The Women's Alzheimer's Movement.