

CHAPTER 63**(SJR 6)**

A JOINT RESOLUTION calling for a comprehensive state strategy to address the needs of persons with Alzheimer's disease and related disorders in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

WHEREAS, Alzheimer's disease is a slow, progressive disorder of the brain that results in loss of memory and other cognitive function and, eventually, results in death; and

WHEREAS, because Alzheimer's is accompanied by memory loss, poor judgment, changes in personality and behavior, and a tendency to wander, individuals with this disease are at increased risk for accidental injury, getting lost, abuse, neglect, and exploitation; and

WHEREAS, one in ten persons over the age of 65 and almost one in every two people over the age of 85 has Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia; and

WHEREAS, over the past ten years, the number of Kentuckians with Alzheimer's and related dementia has risen dramatically to over 74,000 people and is expected to increase to over 97,000 by 2025, when baby boomers enter the age of greatest risk for Alzheimer's; and

WHEREAS, by 2005, the number of the baby boomer generation entering the age of greatest risk for Alzheimer's is expected to increase to over 97,000; and

WHEREAS, Alzheimer's disease takes an enormous toll on loving family members as caregivers watch the deleterious effects of the disease closely and often suffer more stress, depression, and health problems than caregivers of people with other illnesses; and

WHEREAS, Alzheimer's disease is considered to be early in onset if an individual is younger than age 65 when symptoms first appear in the 30s, 40s, and 50s; and

WHEREAS, new data shows that there may be half a million Americans under the age of 65 who have dementia or cognitive impairment at a early onset; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Kentucky recently undertook the Kentucky Elder Readiness Initiative (KERI) to examine its ability to meet the needs of a rapidly aging population and the Long Term Living Initiative to examine Medicaid and continuum of care services; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Kentucky needs to assess the current and future impact of Alzheimer's disease on Kentuckians and state systems, programs, and services to ensure an integrated, comprehensive, coordinated, and up-to-date strategy to address the needs of this growing segment of Kentucky's population; and

WHEREAS, within the Cabinet for Health and Family Services there is an Office on Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders and an Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Advisory Council, which was established by statute; and

WHEREAS, the office and council are charged with overseeing policy and services affecting residents of Kentucky with dementia and their families and caregivers; recommending delivery of services in the most effective and efficient manner possible to facilitate the needs of people with dementia and their caregivers; assisting with the dissemination of program and educational materials; promoting public and professional awareness and education of dementia and access to needed services and programs; and enhancing the quality of life for persons affected by Alzheimer's, and their caregivers; and

WHEREAS, currently state programs, resources, information and services serving this population are fragmented and many are out-dated;

NOW, THEREFORE,

Be it resolved by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

Section 1. The Kentucky Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Advisory Council and Office are directed to assess the current and future impact of Alzheimer's disease on Kentuckians; to examine the existing services and resources addressing the needs of persons with Alzheimer's, their families, and caregivers; and to develop a strategy to mobilize a state response to this public health crisis.

Section 2. The Kentucky Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Advisory Council shall include an examination of the following in its assessment and recommendations:

- (1) Trends in state Alzheimer's population and needs, including the changing population with dementia, including but not limited to:
 - (a) State role in long-term care, family caregiver support, and assistance to persons with early-state and early onset of Alzheimer's; and
 - (b) State policy regarding persons with Alzheimer's and developmental disabilities;
- (2) Existing services, resources, and capacity, including but not limited to the:
 - (a) Type, cost and availability of dementia services;
 - (b) Capacity of public safety and law enforcement to respond to persons with Alzheimer's;
 - (c) Availability of home- and community-based resources for persons with Alzheimer's and respite care to assist families;
 - (d) Inventory of long-term care special dementia care units;
 - (e) Adequacy and appropriateness of geriatric-psychiatric units for persons with behavior disorders associated with Alzheimer's and related dementia;
 - (f) Assisted living residential options for persons with dementia; and
 - (g) State support of Alzheimer's research through Kentucky universities and other resources; and
- (3) Needed state policies or responses, including but not limited to recommendations for the provision of clear and coordinated services and supports to persons and families living with Alzheimer's and related disorders and strategies to address any identified gaps in services.

Section 3. The Kentucky Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Advisory Council is directed to submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the Kentucky General Assembly and the Governor no later than January, 2008.

Approved March 21, 2007.