



Illinois Association of Area Agencies on Aging

Illinois Aging Network Alert

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Support HB 5358 (Hernandez) & SB 3919 (Turner)

Support \$6 million to fund the Illinois Family Caregiver Act

Dear State Senators & State Representatives,

Please sign on as a co-sponsor to HB 5358 & SB 3919... On behalf of the statewide network of Illinois Area Agencies, we are writing to ask you sign in as a sponsor for House Bill 5358 and Senate Bill 3919. These companion bills would provide funding to support service and resources for unpaid family caregivers. Current funding is \$5 million. In order to serve more of the estimated 1.3 million unpaid Illinois family caregivers, this appropriations bill would provide a small increase (\$1 million).

Return on Investment... Investing in family caregivers is not only the right thing to do, but it is also a wise financial decision for the state. This support allows residents to safely and comfortably age in their own homes when possible, to preserve communities, and to avoid expensive institutional care. In the state of Washington, a similar program successfully delayed nursing home admissions by 18 months, ultimately resulting in significant savings by reducing Medicaid payments.

One in five of us currently serve as unpaid family caregivers... Family caregivers provide care to loved ones and make it possible for older adults, people with disabilities, and veterans to live independently in their homes and communities. Family caregivers are the backbone of the care system in Illinois and across the United States.

This critical funding would allow Area Agencies on Aging and partner providers to serve additional caregivers, supporting their physical and mental health and delaying placement of loved ones in long term care facilities. Through an evidence-based T-Care screening tool, service providers can better support and assist unpaid family caregivers by focusing on the most critical services for caregivers.

Caregiver stories from the front lines... We encourage you to read stories we gathered with the Illinois Family Caregiver Coalition. Please click here <https://illinoisfamilycaregiver.org/news/caregiver-stories-download/> to hear powerful stories directly from 26 Illinois family caregivers about their caregiving experience. They shared honest feedback about what's needed and what they would like policymakers to understand better about caregiving.

The Illinois Association of Area Agencies on Aging urge you to invest in our family caregivers. It is crucial that we support for these individuals who tirelessly care for their loved ones.

Let's work together to support our aging and disability communities and their caregivers and improve the quality of life for caregivers and loved ones throughout the state!

Thank you for your continued support and for your attention to this critical issue.

For more information, contact:

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