



Bill: SB 809 - Supporting Our Caregiver Infrastructure Program - Feasibility Study

Committee: House Health Committee

Position: Favorable

Date: April 2, 2026

On behalf of the 127,200 Marylanders living with Alzheimer's disease and their 247,000 caregivers, the Alzheimer's Association supports *SB 809 - Supporting Our Caregiver Infrastructure Program - Feasibility Study*. As amended, this bill directs the University of Maryland to conduct a feasibility study on establishing the Supporting our Caregiver Infrastructure Program (the Program) to provide universal payments to caregivers.

Maryland is facing a fast-growing dementia public health crisis. On top of the increasing number of Marylanders living with dementia, the impact on unpaid caregivers - most often family or close friends - places strain on their own health and well-being. In 2025, an estimated 258,000 Marylanders provided 292 million hours of unpaid dementia care, averaging 22 hours per week.¹ This caregiving role, equivalent to a part-time job, plays a critical role in Maryland's care infrastructure, yet it remains often undervalued.

In addition, more than 62% of dementia caregivers in Maryland live with at least one chronic health condition, and one in five experience depression. Furthermore, 60% of dementia caregivers remain in the workforce, but many report needing to adjust their schedules, reduce hours, or take leave because of caregiving demands. When caregivers cannot sustain their caregiving role due to their own health decline, burnout, or competing responsibilities, the person living with dementia often experiences avoidable emergency care, institutionalization, or other disruptions that are costly both to families and our healthcare system.²

SB 809 creates a needed roadmap to determine whether supporting caregivers financially is feasible and beneficial to the health and stability of Maryland families. Maryland's unpaid caregivers form an essential, often invisible foundation of the state's health care system. A feasibility study is a next step toward ensuring that caregivers, and those living with dementia, receive the support they need.

For these reasons, the Alzheimer's Association respectfully requests a favorable report. Please contact Megan Peters, Director of Government Affairs at mrpeters@alz.org with any questions.

¹ 2025 Maryland Alzheimer's Statistics.

<https://www.alz.org/getmedia/465b005a-2060-41ac-bbb1-bb79ea5c18c1/maryland-alzheimers-facts-figures.pdf>

² Sullivan SS, de Rosa C, Li C-S, Chang Y-P. Dementia caregiver burdens predict overnight hospitalization and hospice utilization. *Palliative and Supportive Care*. 2023;21(6):1001-1015. doi:10.1017/S1478951522001249