May 9, 2017

The Honorable Susan Collins
The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
United States Senate
United States Senate
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
709 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Collins and Senator Baldwin:

Thank you for your efforts to work on a bipartisan basis to support family caregivers. We, the undersigned, write in support of the Recognize, Assist, Include, Support, and Engage (RAISE) Family Caregivers Act (S. 1028).

Family caregivers are the backbone of services and supports in this country. They help make it possible for older adults and people with disabilities to live independently in their homes and communities. About 40 million family caregivers provide about $470 billion annually in unpaid care to their loved ones. About 3.7 million family caregivers provide care to a child under age 18 because of a medical, behavioral, or other condition or disability, and 6.5 million family caregivers assist both adults and children. Our country relies on the contributions family caregivers make and should recognize and support them.

The RAISE Family Caregivers Act would implement the federal Commission on Long-Term Care’s bipartisan recommendation that Congress require the development of a national strategy to support family caregivers. The bill would create an advisory body to bring together representatives from both the private and public sectors to advise and make recommendations. The strategy would identify specific actions that communities, providers, employers, government, and others can take to recognize and support family caregivers and be updated. The RAISE Family Caregivers Act is also consistent with a recommendation last year by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine calling for a national family caregiver strategy.

By supporting family caregivers, we can help people live at home where they want to be, helping to delay or prevent more costly care and unnecessary hospitalizations, saving taxpayer dollars. We appreciate your bipartisan leadership and are committed to working with you to pass the RAISE Family Caregivers Act.

Sincerely,

AARP
Allies for Independence
Alzheimer’s Association
Alzheimer’s Foundation of America
Alzheimer’s Impact Movement
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association on Health and Disability
PHI
The Arc of the United States
The Jewish Federations of North America
The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson’s Research
The Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving, GSW