

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 16, 2024

The Honorable Xavier Becerra  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health and Human  
Services 200 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Becerra:

Every day, family caregivers across our country tend to the needs of their loved ones and provide an estimated economic value of \$400 billion in unpaid care a year.<sup>1</sup> This invisible frontline of our healthcare system is critical for the health and economic strength of our nation. We are writing to request that you establish an Office of Caregiver Health at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to help support family caregivers.

Family caregivers experience disproportionate physical, emotional, and financial strain and social isolation because of their caregiving responsibilities. They span every generation, come from all backgrounds, and care for individuals with a wide array of conditions and payors. We need to ensure the current investments we are making in federal caregiver programs are maximized and truly benefit those who care for their family, friend or neighbor in the most effective way. If caregivers do not receive the support they need today, they may become tomorrow's patient.

The late former First Lady Rosalynn Carter believed that the establishment of a new Office of Caregiver Health at the HHS would dismantle silos that are barriers to progress by creating ways to coordinate support for the needs of caregivers.

The Office of Caregiver Health's mission should be to advance the health and well-being of family caregivers across the nation through coordinating federal services, support, research, and education. Key functions of the office should include:

- Ensuring caregivers are understood and monitored as a population with their own needs.
- Ensuring the needs of caregivers are considered in federal programs and policies.
- Leveraging research and ensuring effective federal program evaluation and delivery across federal agencies to recommend policy and regulatory reforms to mitigate and prevent adverse outcomes from caregiving.

Further, this office would assess caregivers' needs, identify all existing and relevant programs and policies that may impact them, and coordinate access to a streamlined system to locate the appropriate support and resources.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25294306/>

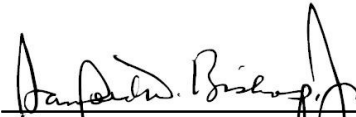
We look forward to your action on this request to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of federal programs for family caregivers, who serve as an invisible and critical part of our nation's health system. Thank you in advance for your consideration of taking immediate action to establish an Office of Caregiver Health within the Office of the Secretary at HHS.

Sincerely,



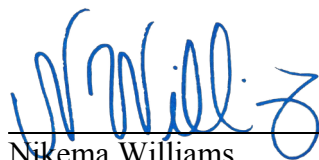
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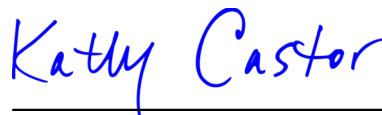
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Kathy Castor  
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Member of Congress



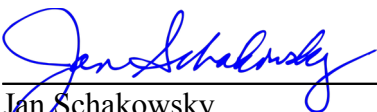
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