



## New York State Public Health Association (NYSPHA)

May 23, 2022

The Honorable Kathy Hochul  
Governor of New York State  
New York State Capitol  
Albany, NY 12224

**RE: NYSPHA Recommends the Governor sign S5734A/6202A (Ryan/Barrett). The Bill requires a study of the issues impacting the continuum of caregiving in the state.**

Dear Governor Hochul,

The New York State Public Health Association (NYSPHA) is pleased to provide our recommendations to you on these bills, which have passed both houses of the legislature. NYSPHA is the New York affiliate of the American Public Health Association (APHA) and serves as the statewide organization for members from all disciplines across the spectrum of public health professionals, organizations, academia, and students pursuing careers in public health. Our mission is to improve the public's health through advocacy, education, networking, and professional development.

### Background on the issue

The United States is experiencing an unprecedented aging of the population primarily due to the aging of the baby boomer generation (born between 1946 and 1964). The likelihood of acquiring a chronic or disabling condition increases with age and the incidence of Alzheimer's and other dementias increases significantly for those over the age of 85 (Alzheimer's Association, 2022). In addition, the longevity of those with chronic and disabling conditions is increasing. The confluence of these two factors is placing added strain on the systems that are designed to care for these populations as well as the informal and family caregivers who provide the predominant amount of long-term care.

Friends, family members, and other unpaid family caregivers provide the majority of long-term care services in the United States (National Institute on Aging, 2017). A significant number of family caregivers are women, middle aged, married, and employed (National Alliance for Caregiving & AARP, 2020). Some caregivers are sandwiched between caring for aging parents while also caring for children or family members with disabilities. In 2021, about 48 million family caregivers provided an estimated 34 billion hours of care to an adult with limitations in daily activities at an estimated economic value of \$470 billion (NAC & AARP). This care is demanding and exhausting and caregivers need support to be able to manage. The formal system of care would crumble without this informal provision of care.

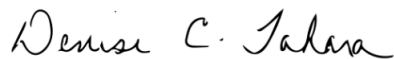
The systems of care that are designed to support older adults and children and adults with disabilities and chronic health conditions rely on both paid and unpaid caregivers. Paid caregivers are underpaid and under-recognized and were on the front line during COVID (and still are). Informal, unpaid caregivers are the backbone of the long-term care system and need support to continue to provide the level of care demanded of them. A study of the issues related to this complex dilemma is important, but hopefully it will not end with a study that goes nowhere. Policy changes, funding, and program development to support these critical care providers will be required.

The bill before the Governor for signature would require the appropriate state agencies to study the issues around paid and unpaid caregivers and to make recommendations to address the major gaps in the system of caregiving in New York State.

**NYSPPHA's Recommendation.**

We respectfully recommend the Governor sign S5734A/6202A (Ryan/Barrett) requiring a study of the issues impacting the continuum of caregiving in the state.

Sincerely,



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New York State Public Health Association  
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*CC: Elizabeth Fine, Counsel to the Governor*

*Dr. Mary Bassett, Commissioner, New York State Department of Health*

*Angela Profetta, Deputy Secretary for Health and Human Services, Executive Chamber*

*Tina Kim, Assistant Secretary for Health (Rachel Baker)*

*Kristin M. Proud, Acting Executive Deputy Commissioner, New York State Department of Health*

*Dr. Ann Sullivan, Commissioner, New York State Office of Mental Health*

*Arlene Gonzalez-Sanchez, Commissioner, New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports*

References:

Alzheimer's Association. 2022 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures. Alzheimer's Dement 2022;18 <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/what-long-term-care>

AARP and National Alliance for Caregiving. Caregiving in the United States 2020. Washington, DC: AARP. May 2020. <https://doi.org/10.26419/ppi.00103.00>