DATE (insert)

The Honorable Ed Hernandez, O.D.
Chair, Senate Health Committee
State Capitol, Room 2191
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Senate Bill 177 (SB 177) Family Caregiver Respite Support

Dear Senator Hernandez:

I am writing to express my support for SB 177 (Nguyen) Family Caregiver Respite Support which will appropriate funds to the eleven statewide Caregiver Resource Centers (CRCs) to reinstate much needed respite care services to unpaid family caregivers.

According to data from AARP, approximately 4.5 million unpaid family caregivers in California provide care to a family member. The economic value of the 3.85 million hours of unpaid labor provided by these caregivers is approximately $47 billion. One-third of all California households contain at least one caregiver who provides 20+ unpaid hours a week.

Respite care provides caregivers a temporary rest from caregiving, while the person being cared for continues to receive assistance in a safe environment. Respite supports and strengthens a caregiver’s ability to stay healthy so that he or she can continue to help care for their loved one at home.

Caregiver Resource Centers are the lead agency in California that exclusively serve and support unpaid family caregivers through respite and counseling services. SB 177 will allow the CRCs the opportunity to provide desperately needed respite for caregivers statewide, with the respite break, caregivers will be able to take mental and physical care of themselves.

I have seen first-hand that CRCs are a vital safety net for family caregivers caring for a loved one with Alzheimer’s Disease, Parkinson’s, Huntington’s disease, traumatic brain injury, stroke or related dementias. Not providing respite services will force people into more expensive services, such as emergency room visits and hospitalization.

I respectfully request your support for SB 177 Family Caregiver Respite Support.

Sincerely,

cc: The Honorable Members of the Senate Health Committee
Senator Janet Nguyen
Senator Toni G. Atkins
Senator Connie M. Leyva
Senator Holly Mitchell
Senator Bill Monning
Senator Josh Newman
Senator Jim Nielsen
Senator Richard D. Roth