

July 10, 2019

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin  
709 Hart Senate Office Building  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito  
172 Russell Senate Office Building  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

**RE: Support for the Palliative Care and Hospice Education and Training Act (PCHETA)**

Dear Senators Baldwin and Capito:

The undersigned organizations write to express our support for the Palliative Care and Hospice Education and Training Act (PCHETA). This bipartisan legislation will make a difference in the lives of millions of patients living with serious or life-threatening illness and their caregivers.

Despite a high intensity of medical treatment, many seriously ill individuals still experience troubling symptoms, unmet psychological and personal care needs, fragmented care, poor communication with their health care providers, and enormous strains on their family caregivers. However, numerous studies have shown that adding palliative care can improve pain and symptom control, quality of life, and patient and family satisfaction.

Palliative care is an interdisciplinary model of care focused on relief of the pain, stress and other debilitating symptoms of serious illness, such as cancer, cardiac disease, respiratory disease, kidney failure, Alzheimer's, AIDS, ALS, and MS. Its goal is to relieve suffering and provide the best possible quality of life for patients and their families. Palliative care can be offered simultaneously with life-prolonging and curative therapies for persons living with serious, complex, and eventually terminal illness and includes hospice care. By its very nature, palliative care is patient-centered care — translating patient goals to appropriate treatments.

We appreciate your leadership in recognizing the significant role palliative care and hospice can play in creating lasting change across the health care system. With PCHETA's focus on expanding the interdisciplinary palliative care workforce, promoting awareness of the benefits of palliative care among patient and providers, and improving the evidence base for this care, you have demonstrated a strong commitment to addressing key barriers to palliative care access for the growing number of Americans with serious or life-threatening illness.

Delivery of high-quality palliative care cannot take place without sufficient numbers of health care professionals with appropriate training and skills. Students graduating from medical, nursing or health care professional schools today have very little, if any, training in the core precepts of pain and symptom management, advance care planning, communication skills, and care coordination for patients with serious or life-threatening illness. Further, there is a large gap between the number of health care professionals with palliative care training and the number required to meet the needs of the expanding population of seriously ill patients. PCHETA would go a long way towards bridging this gap by establishing education centers and career incentive awards to improve the training of doctors, nurses, physician assistants, social workers and other health professionals in palliative care.

PCHETA also aims to strengthen clinical practice and improve health care delivery for patients living with serious or life-threatening illness, as well as their families, by directing funding toward palliative care research. Research funding for palliative care and pain and symptom management comprises less than 0.1 percent of the National Institutes of Health annual budget. PCHETA would direct an expansion and intensification of research in these important areas.

At the same time, more must be done to ensure patients and providers are aware of the benefits of palliative care. According to the Institute of Medicine, there is a "need for better understanding of the role of palliative care among both the public and professionals across the continuum of care." PCHETA would

direct the implementation of a national education and awareness campaign so that patients, families, and health professionals understand the essential role of palliative care in ensuring high-quality care for individuals facing serious or life-threatening illness.

Through your leadership last Congress, PCHETA had overwhelming bi-partisan support with more than 50 Senate cosponsors. We appreciate your continued support and dedication to this important issue. We look forward to working with you toward quick passage of this legislation in the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Sincerely,

Alzheimer's Association  
Alzheimer's Impact Movement  
American Academy of Hospice and Palliative  
Medicine  
American Academy of PA's  
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network  
American College of Surgeons Commission on  
Cancer  
American Geriatrics Society  
American Heart Association | American Stroke  
Association  
American Psychological Association  
American Psychosocial Oncology Society  
American Society of Clinical Oncology  
Association of Oncology Social Work  
Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology  
Nurses  
Association of Professional Chaplains  
The California State University Institute for  
Palliative Care  
Cambia Health Solutions  
Cancer Support Community  
Catholic Health Association of the United States  
Center to Advance Palliative Care  
Children's National Health System  
Coalition for Compassionate Care of California  
Colorectal Cancer Alliance  
Compassus  
Courageous Parents Network  
ElevatingHOME | VNAmerica  
The Gary and Mary West Health Institute

The George Washington Institute for Spirituality  
and Health  
GO<sub>2</sub>Foundation for Lung Cancer  
HealthCare Chaplaincy Network  
Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association  
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society  
Motion Picture & Television Fund  
National Alliance for Caregiving  
National Association for Home Care & Hospice  
National Association of Social Workers  
National Brain Tumor Society  
National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship  
National Coalition for Hospice and Palliative Care  
National Hospice and Palliative Care  
Organization  
National Palliative Care Research Center  
National Patient Advocate Foundation  
National POLST Paradigm  
Oncology Nursing Society  
Pediatric Palliative Care Coalition  
Physician Assistants in Hospice and Palliative  
Medicine  
Prevent Cancer Foundation  
ResolutionCare Network  
Social Work Hospice & Palliative Care Network  
Society of Palliative Care Pharmacists  
St. Baldrick's Foundation  
Supportive Care Matters  
Susan G. Komen  
Supportive Care Coalition  
Trinity Health

**State Associations Supporting PCHETA**

Arizona Hospice and Palliative Care Organization	Home Care, Hospice and Palliative Care Alliance of New Hampshire
Home Care Association of Arkansas	Home Care Association of New York State (HCA)
California Association for Health Services at Home (CAHSAH)	New York State Association of Healthcare Providers
Home Care Association of Colorado	Association for Home & Hospice Care of North Carolina
Connecticut Association for Health Care at Home	LeadingAge Ohio
Home Care Association of Florida	Ohio Council for Home Care & Hospice
Georgia Association for Home Health Agencies	Oklahoma Association for Home Care & Hospice
Illinois HomeCare & Hospice Council	Oregon Association for Home Care
Indiana Association for Home Care and Hospice	Pennsylvania HomeCare Association
Healthcare Association of Hawaii	Rhode Island Partnership for Home Care
Kansas Home Care & Hospice Association	South Carolina Home Care and Hospice Association
Kentucky Home Care Association	Tennessee Association for Home Care
HomeCare Association of Louisiana	Texas Association for Home Care & Hospice
Home Care & Hospice Alliance of Maine	VNAs of Vermont
Home Care Alliance of Massachusetts	Virginia Association for Home Care & Hospice
Michigan HomeCare and Hospice Association	Home Care Association of Washington
Minnesota HomeCare Association	West Virginia Council of Home Care Agencies
Nebraska Home Care Association	

CC:

The Honorable Angus S. King, Jr.  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kyrsten Sinema  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Cindy Hyde-Smith  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin Cramer  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Hoeven  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510