



*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
*House of Representatives*  
*State House, Boston 02133-1054*

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## **Representative Smola supports bill to assist Alzheimer's and dementia patients in Massachusetts**

**BOSTON – Representative Todd M. Smola (R-Warren, Ranking Member, Committee on Ways & Means)** joined with his House colleagues this week to pass legislation aimed at developing an integrated state plan to address Alzheimer's disease and non-Alzheimer's dementia.

House Bill 4116, which was approved by the House on a vote of 153-0 on January 31, calls for expanding the clinical research, training, treatment, and care of individuals suffering from Alzheimer's disease and other cognitive impairments in Massachusetts. It also establishes an advisory council that will focus on the research and treatment of Alzheimer's disease.

According to the Alzheimer's Association, 5 million Americans are currently living with Alzheimer's, a number that is expected to climb to 16 million by the year 2050. Alzheimer's is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States, and 1 out of every 3 seniors die with Alzheimer's or another dementia.

"Alzheimer's disease and dementia touches the lives of so many families, but most people are unaware of the full range of services available to patients and their caregivers," said Representative Smola. "This bill will not only make it easier for Massachusetts residents to access the proper care for their loved ones, but will also enhance the state's efforts to develop better treatment options for Alzheimer's patients moving forward."

In addition to requiring caseworkers and medical professionals to be trained in the diagnosis and treatment of patients with cognitive impairments, House Bill 4116 gives hospitals three years to implement an operational plan for recognizing and managing patients with dementia. It also

authorizes physicians to provide information to the patient's family and caregivers regarding medical and non-medical services and treatment.

The bill also seeks to:

- Accelerate the development of Alzheimer's disease treatments;
- Coordinate the health care and treatment of individuals with Alzheimer's disease;
- Protect minorities who are at higher risk for Alzheimer's disease or are less likely to receive care, be a part of clinical research, and benefit from service efforts;
- Coordinate with federal entities to better integrate information on Alzheimer's disease;
- Provide information to state agencies that address Alzheimer's disease; and
- Implement a strategy to increase the diagnostic rate in the Commonwealth

The bill now moves to the Senate for further action. For additional information please contact Representative Smola at [Todd.Smola@mahouse.gov](mailto:Todd.Smola@mahouse.gov) or (617)722-2100.

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