

## **Statement of Support: A3061 (DenDekker)**

**Authorizes and directs the Department of Health and the Office for the Aging to conduct a study of fees and charges assessed to residents of assisted living facilities, specifically to review the rate of increase.**

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The Alzheimer's Association, New York State Coalition is the leading statewide organization advocating for all New Yorkers affected by Alzheimer's disease and dementia. Our mission is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. We have a diverse and bilingual staff of specialists and master's-level clinicians that can work with New Yorkers in need, in person or over the phone and through our free 24-hour Helpline. To achieve this mission, we advance public policy, increase concern and awareness of Alzheimer's disease and the services available through the Alzheimer's Association, and provide and enhance care and support.

Almost 400,000 New Yorkers have Alzheimer's disease or other dementias. Alzheimer's is the most common form of dementia and is the 6<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in the United States. There is no treatment or cure.

Currently, more than 45,000 New Yorkers live in assisted living and approximately 40% of them have some form of dementia. Consistent with industry best practices for those with dementia, the Coalition advocates for optimizing the most appropriate, but least restrictive, residential setting. When home is no longer a viable option for those with dementia, assisted living is a preferred setting -- where residents receive some cueing and support in a generally secure space, but live more independently than in a skilled nursing facility.

Many with Alzheimer's disease and dementia would be able to transfer to or remain in assisted living, but for the price. Those who spend down their private funds usually must apply for Medicaid and shift to a skilled nursing facility, often before that level of care is needed. The Coalition has been working with the Department of Health to explore ways to make assisted living more affordable, and thus more accessible, for more New Yorkers.

**The Coalition supports A3061**, which authorizes and directs the Department of Health and the Office for the Aging to conduct a study of fees and charges assessed to residents of assisted living facilities, specifically to review the rate of increase being assessed to residents. To have a broader and deeper understanding across the state of assisted living facilities' rate structures would allow those with Alzheimer's disease and dementia and their families to better plan their futures and their livelihoods.