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June 25, 2019

The Honorable Anna G. Eshoo  
Chairwoman  
House Committee on Energy and  
Commerce  
Health Subcommittee  
2125 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Michael C. Burgess, M.D.  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Energy and  
Commerce  
Health Subcommittee  
2125 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Eshoo and Ranking Member Burgess:

AARP, on behalf of our nearly 38 million members and all older Americans nationwide, thanks you for holding a hearing on the bipartisan Lifespan Respite Care Reauthorization Act (H.R. 2035). AARP has endorsed this legislation to help support family caregivers caring for loved ones of all ages.

Family caregivers help make it possible for older adults, veterans, and people with disabilities of all ages to live independently in their homes and communities. About 40 million family caregivers provide about \$470 billion in unpaid care annually. Most of us are, have been, or will be a family caregiver or we will need help to live independently. While many family caregivers find caregiving to be an enriching experience and a source of deep satisfaction, family caregivers also take on physical, emotional, and financial challenges in their caregiving roles. About 30 percent of family caregivers provide, on average, 62 hours of care weekly and some family caregivers provide care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Respite care provides family caregivers with vital temporary relief from their caregiving responsibilities and is one of the most commonly requested caregiver support services. Respite care can allow a family caregiver much needed time to go see their own doctor, run errands, go to work, and take care of themselves (ultimately helping them to better assist their loved one). The Lifespan Respite Care Program helps family caregivers caring for loved ones regardless of age or disability, including by providing respite services, training respite workers and volunteers, providing information about and assistance in accessing services, and better coordinating services. Respite can extend the time an individual is cared for at home, potentially delaying costly institutional care

and saving taxpayer dollars. The Lifespan Respite Care Reauthorization Act would reauthorize the Lifespan Respite Care Program through Fiscal Year 2024, authorize increased funding for the program, and add new reporting requirements.

We appreciate the Subcommittee on Health holding this hearing and look forward to working with Members on both sides of the aisle to advance this legislation to support our nation's family caregivers. If you have any further questions, please feel free to call me or have your staff contact Rhonda Richards of our Government Affairs staff at [rrichards@aarp.org](mailto:rrichards@aarp.org) or 202-434-3770.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Certner", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Certner  
Legislative Counsel & Legislative Policy Director  
Government Affairs