



KEN SKOWRONSKI

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 82nd ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

(608) 266-8590
Toll-Free: (888) 534-0082
Rep.Skowronski@legis.wi.gov

P.O. Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708-8953

First, I'd like to thank Chairman Grothman and Senators of the Judiciary and Labor committee for holding this hearing on AB 710 or the "Silver Alert" Bill.

This bill recently passed the Assembly with unanimous bipartisan support, 97-0 last month.

There were two amendments to the bill. One made a change removing the requirement that an afflicted adult had to be age 65 or older for the alert to go out. As we learned through working with interested parties like the Alzheimer's association, it is not uncommon for people to suffer from these diseases while in their 50s, and there have been instances where individuals as young as mid-30s have been diagnosed with the disease.

AB 710 is designed to create a safety system for at-risk afflicted adults. This bill is similar to the incredibly successful "Amber Alerts" that are put out when a child is believed to be abducted. In this case, a "Silver Alert" would be broadcast when an at-risk afflicted individual is lost or in danger. The hope is that an alert would aid authorities in finding the lost person as soon as possible.

According to the Alzheimer's Association, more than 60 percent of those with Alzheimer's or another form of dementia will wander, and if a person is not found within 24 hours, up to half of individuals who wander will suffer serious injury or death.¹

This important measure will save lives. There have been instances in the past in our state where this alert system could have benefited authorities in finding at-risk Afflicted individual. Racine has had two recent stories of dementia patients wandering. In October, a Racine County Sheriff found a man wandering on the side of the road, less than a mile from his home, wearing nothing but pajamas and a jacket. In December, an 82-year-old Caledonia woman, missing for more than a day, was reportedly found collapsed in a grocery store in Wheaton, Illinois.²

Fortunately, these stories have positive endings. Unfortunately, last year a 76-year-old dementia sufferer was found dead in Blanchardville, Wisconsin with weather being a contributing factor in her wandering death.³

With Silver Alert, serious injuries and death from wandering could be prevented. There are currently 22 states that operate a Silver Alert program and another nine that operate something similar. Other states that have currently Silver Alert has been successful in returning these at risk individuals safely.

¹ http://www.alz.org/norcal/in_my_community_18411.asp

²² Woman found in Illinois http://journaltimes.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/woman-found-in-illinois/article_1b19ba6e-6c3ba-11e3-acc7-0019bb2963f4.html

³³ UPDATE: Missing Freeport Woman Found Dead in Wisconsin <http://www.wifr.com/news/headlines/Freeport-Woman-Missing-187587961.html>



KEN SKOWRONSKI

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 82nd ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

(608) 266-8590
Toll-Free: (888) 534-0082
Rep.Skowronski@legis.wi.gov

P.O. Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708-8953

Georgia's program has garnered safe return of 70 of the 71 calls issued between its inception in 2006 and January of 2009.⁴

In Texas, the Silver Alert system was invoked 52 times in the first year following its inception in September 2007. Of these alerts, 48 of the missing seniors were located safely, and 13 of these recoveries were directly attributable to their Silver Alert program.⁵

Unfortunately, stories of dementia patients wandering off are all too common, and in a state like Wisconsin, especially during cold wintery months, finding an afflicted person as quickly as possible is of critical importance.

I appreciate your thoughtful consideration of this bill in an effort to keep at risk afflicted individuals safe.

⁴ System successful in finding lost adults http://chronicle.augusta.com/stories/2009/01/10/met_507153.shtml

⁵ House congressional Record September 2008. <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CREC-2008-09-15/pdf/CREC-2008-09-15-pt1-PgH8078.pdf#page=4>

alzheimer's association®

March 12, 2014

Senator Glenn Grothman, Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Re: Support of Assembly Bill 710, relating to the alert for missing adults at risk, "Silver Alert"

Dear Senator Grothman,

First, we thank you and the members of the Committee on Judiciary and Labor for holding this hearing today. The Alzheimer's Association Wisconsin Chapter Network is in support of Assembly Bill 710, relating to the alert for missing adults at risk, "Silver Alert" and making an appropriation which supports a staff person and the program. According to data from the Wisconsin Department of Health, in 2010 there were close to 120,000 people in Wisconsin living with dementia. Due to the aging of the population, in less than 30 years, Wisconsin will experience a 68% growth in the number of people with dementia – that's more than 200,000 people. Age is the greatest risk factor for this disease. It will have a tremendous impact on our communities as we try to address the care needs of those persons diagnosed with dementia and as we try to address the needs of the family caregiver.

One of the most disheartening symptoms of the disease is loss of memory of familiar people and places. Six in 10 people with dementia will wander. A person with Alzheimer's may not remember his or her name or address, and can become disoriented, even in familiar places. Wandering among people with dementia is dangerous, but there are strategies and services to help prevent it. We believe the proposed legislation will help reduce the tragic consequences of someone with Alzheimer's or a related dementia wandering and losing their way home.

Currently, in Wisconsin, we have an AMBER Alert system. Although Silver Alert and AMBER Alert have the same goal – the safe return of individuals to their homes and families, distinct differences exist between the two programs.

AMBER Alert	Silver Alert
<p>AMBER Alert is a well-established federally funded program developed for missing or potentially abducted children.</p> <p>AMBER Alert involves searching for a minor who has not simply wandered off, but has been taken, so the program utilizes immediate and far reaching amplified search techniques.</p>	<p>Silver Alerts are new state programs that assist vulnerable adults who have wandered.</p> <p>Most people with Alzheimer's disease who wander are found less than 1.5 miles from home, so the search techniques are typically very different from the techniques used with AMBER Alert. Statewide alerts, such as highway signs notifying the public</p>

<p>Before an AMBER Alert is issued, three criteria must be met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law enforcement confirms a child has been abducted. • Law enforcement believes the circumstances surrounding the child's disappearance indicate the child is in danger of serious bodily harm or death. • There is enough descriptive information about the child or abductor or abductor's vehicle for law enforcement to believe an immediate broadcast alert will help. <p>These strict criteria ensure AMBER Alert issuance is rare, generating effective public attention and response when issued.</p>	<p>and media, are not always the most effective way to find an adult wanderer.</p> <p>Many persons with Alzheimer's disease who wander do so repeatedly, and as more people develop Alzheimer's disease, a corresponding increase in wandering incidents will occur. Alerting the media and the public every time an adult wanders would desensitize the public to the issue of wandering, rendering the alert system ineffective, and potentially creating further danger for the person who has wandered.</p>
--	---

Silver Alerts can also enhance existing successful programs, such as Medic Alert® + Safe Return®. The Alzheimer's Association's Safe Return® program began in 1993 as a nationwide identification, support and enrollment program which provided assistance when a person with Alzheimer's or a related dementia wandered (either locally or far from home).

We encourage the legislature to pass "Silver Alert" legislation helping thousands of people throughout Wisconsin to reconnect safely with their loved ones who have become lost while wandering.

Sincerely,



Kim Kinner
 Executive Director
 Alzheimer's Association Greater Wisconsin Chapter
 2900 Curry Lane, Ste. A
 Green Bay, WI 54311
 (920) 469-2110

cc: Tom Hlavacek, Alzheimer's Association Southeast Chapter
 Kari Paterson, Alzheimer's Association Southcentral Chapter

My name is Claire Baeb; my husband as you know has passed.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak.

What weighs on my mind right now is that I am so thankful for the West Bend Police Department. Their kindness and excellent care following our road trip, especially for my husband, meant the world to me.

I am not here for myself alone; I am here to give inspiration; I am a voice for all of the mothers, grandmothers and people who have gotten lost.

I believe my brain malfunctioned.

Since that time I have met numerous people who have shared similar stories with me, and as a nurse of 43 years I have such a deep compassion to help, but this time, I needed the help.

Thank you for taking the time to make the Silver Alert system so that others will not have to experience what I have gone through.

Thank you.

Claire Baeb

2747 He Nis Ra La
Green Bay WI 54304

(920) 498-8414

Thank you all for allowing us to come and share our recent experiences, and also our love for our parents.

My job here today :) is to talk about my parents.

My mother is a strong and brave woman; she's just incredible. Her being here today is no different than how she has lived her entire life--in service to others. It is difficult, and we are all trying to find meaning in our sorrow.

My grandparents were first generation Americans--they really came on a boat. With six children they weathered the Great Depression, and this is where my father, later a soldier, honed his sharp shooting skills. My grandfather would give him 20 shells and he was expected to bring back at least 18 squirrels, rabbits or birds. My dad never raised a rifle to his shoulder; he shot from the hip.

He joined the army, and served in WWII in the Battle of the Bulge. My dad volunteered, and was proud of that fact. He wanted his volunteer number on his gravestone, but that's not allowed any more due to privacy issues. Sgt. Baeb 161 296 12. lol Just in case he can hear. lol He knew what it truly meant to be an American. My dad put it all on the line.

My father was a hero.

He was a lead machine gunner, and no one on his team died on his watch. The Battle of the Bulge was especially traumatic. For my dad, who worshiped Wisconsin, the beauty of the winter snow was often marred by the memories of soldier's blood that covered and soaked the snow in the winter of 1944-1945. He carried soldiers frozen bodies across fields and over hills. General Patton insisted they visit the concentration camps as the camps were being evacuated. Patton wanted them to see the true horror of the Hitler regime. And they did. As a result from the war, my dad suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder.

My mom, a retired nursing supervisor at St. Mary's Hospital in Green Bay, is the unsung hero.

For 43 years she worked as a nurse when having a working mother was rare. She completed her bachelor's degree when we were in elementary school. All five of us kids went to private school, and also had music lessons. They were hardworking and frugal.

They got the job done.

My father is gone. He would be shocked and amazed to see us here talking about him. He was smart, a history buff, and could really knock out a crossword puzzle. He was hilarious and horribly vain. His catch phrase, which was hysterical, when referring to himself was that he was "handsome as hell". We loved him, just as he was. We are grateful that his illness was brief and his physical sufferings are no more.

My mom is the one who is suffering during this time; stress and strain of comprehending what happened on their drive haunts her every day and every night, grief of early Alzheimer's, loss of her driver's license, no longer living in her own home, and the death of my father.

Mom and Dad would have been married 60 years this November. Since their road trip she has been hospitalized several times, and has recently recovered from the pneumonia.

How much can one person handle?

We believe that if Silver Alert had been in place in June, my father would still be here and my mother would not be struggling with such illness and grief.

We hope that our sharing today will help prevent more tragedies like the one that our family is currently walking through.

Thank you.

Lorraine (Baeb) Randall

6643 Chevy Way
Tallahassee FL 32317
850.597.2050
botanicalgifts@gmail.com



March 12, 2014

Senate Committee on Labor and Judiciary--AB 710

Rob Gundermann, Public Policy Director Alzheimer's and Dementia Alliance of Wisconsin.

Good afternoon,

Chair Grothman, Members of the Committee, I thank you for holding this hearing today on an important issue that has the potential to impact all of us. There are a number of reasons why we are dealing with an increased number of people with dementia becoming lost. One reason is that Wisconsin is growing older. DHS was kind enough to provide some maps that show how our population will age in the coming decades and I've attached those to my testimony. Another reason is that modern medicine is prolonging our lives and the most common form of dementia, Alzheimer's disease, is largely a disease of age. The longer you live the greater the likelihood of developing Alzheimer's disease. In fact almost half of those 85 years and older have Alzheimer's type dementia. As our population lives longer we will see more people living with Alzheimer's. Unfortunately, while we have made great strides in prolonging life, we haven't developed any new medications to treat Alzheimer's disease in over a decade and we have no medications that will prevent or even delay the progression of the disease. At this point in time all we can do is address symptoms. Wisconsin, like many states, has also expanded the length of time between license renewals to eight years. Coincidentally eight years is the average length of time an individual lives with Alzheimer's. Lastly, we have in some respects become a victim of our own success in that Wisconsin does a very good job of allowing people with Alzheimer's disease to remain in their homes for as long as possible. This is a win-win situation as the vast majority of people with dementia want to live at home and at the same time we save an enormous amount of money in our Medicaid budget by preventing needless institutionalizations but the net result of all these factors is that we have more older people with dementia on the road and the numbers will only increase with time.

Inevitably we will have people with dementia on occasion become lost. The bill before you today addresses this issue. It provides a better mechanism for dealing with these situations. Statistically if we don't find the person within 24 hours the probability of a positive outcome drops to single digits. Essentially we are in a race against dehydration and exposure as those are the two factors that most often cause negative outcomes. In Wisconsin where we experience severe weather the time frame is often less than 24 hours. Assembly Bill 710 will help address these situations quickly by getting the word out far and wide.

Main Office
517 North Segoe Road, Suite 301
Madison, WI 53705
608.232.3400
608.232.3407 fax
888.308.6251 toll-free

Grant/Richland Regional Office
8820 Hwy 35/61 S
Lancaster, WI 53813
608.723.4288
608.723.6122 fax
888.308.6251 toll-free

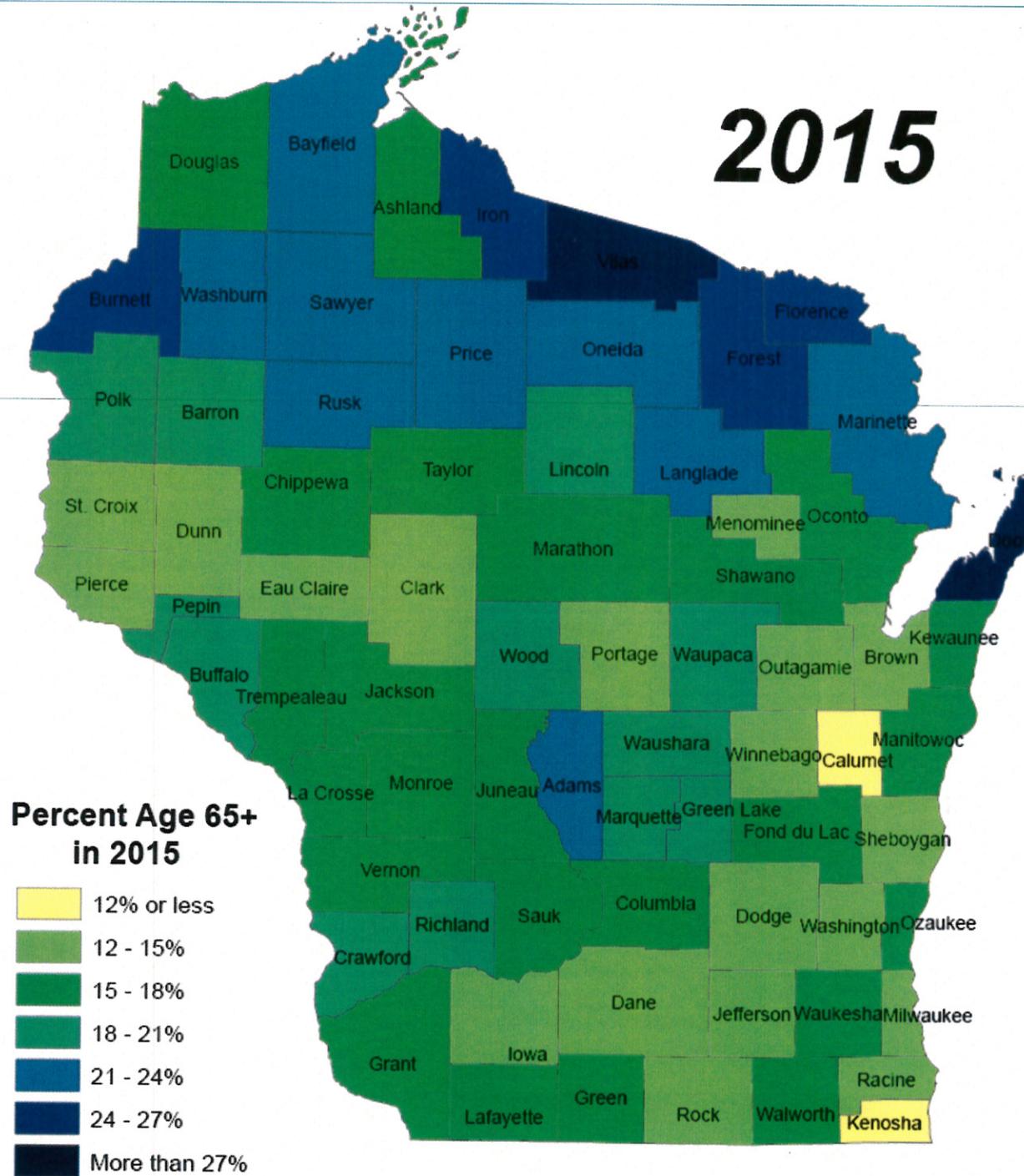
Columbia/Sauk Regional Office
2825 Hunters Trail
Portage, WI 53901
608.742.9055
608.745.3940 fax
888.308.6251 toll-free

 Proud Member of
**Community
Health Charities**
WORKING FOR A HEALTHY WISCONSIN
support@alzwissc.org
www.alzwissc.org

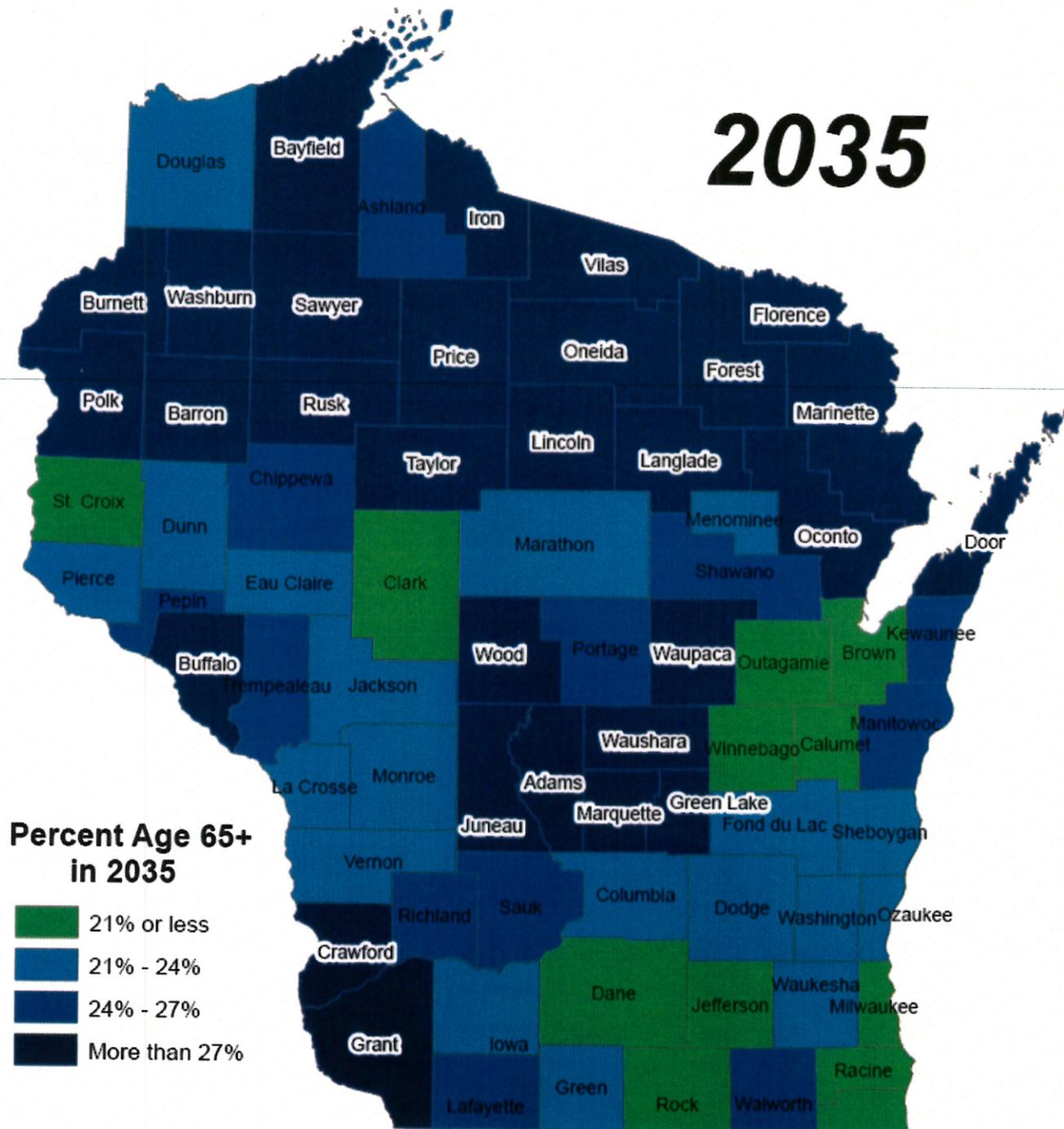
In closing I would just like to mention something a police officer from Ashwaubenon said to me several years ago. He said that every time he has responded to a report of someone driving the wrong way on the interstate the person was either intoxicated or had dementia. Driving the wrong way or forgetting what a stop sign or a stop light means are typical mistakes someone with dementia makes when they get confused. When a person with dementia is driving and gets lost and confused it's in everyone's best interest to find them quickly. This bill will not only help people with dementia to get home safely, it will help everyone sharing the roads with them get home safely too.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I'm happy to try to answer any questions.

2015



2035



**Percent Age 65+
in 2035**

- 21% or less
- 21% - 24%
- 24% - 27%
- More than 27%



“Advocating for All Generations”

The Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, statewide membership organization that was founded in 1978.

Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups

Intergenerational Leadership Development ▪ Education ▪ Advocacy ▪ Elder Law Center

Wisconsin Legislative Public Hearing

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

MADISON: Not that long ago, Mary Black, who was 86-year-old woman with dementia, drove away from her St. David home in Arizona with no money, no water, no cell phone, and no food. Had an alert system similar to the Amber Alerts for abducted children been in place in the State of Arizona, an alert would have been sent to law enforcement officials as to her whereabouts, and she might have been saved in time.

Tragically however, two weeks after Mary Black's disappearance, Black was found dead from exposure a mile from her car.

Since then, states like Arizona, Oregon and Iowa have established a Silver Alert System, similar to the Amber Alert System, which would help find missing people with Dementia and Alzheimer's.

As we know, under Wisconsin's Amber Alert plan, law enforcement agencies and broadcasters partner to inform the public when a child is abducted. The alerts interrupt programming using the Emergency Alert System, alerting citizens and law enforcement of a missing child. What is need now, is a similar system which issues alerts for missing citizens with Dementia and Alzheimer's, regardless of their age.

According to the Alzheimer's Association of Oregon, if a person with Alzheimer's or Dementia wanders off and is not found within 24 hours, there is a 60 percent chance that person will die or suffer a serious injury. That same person is at 80% more risk, if they are not found within 72 hours.

If you examines the success of the Amber Alert System's nationally; according to the recent published U.S. Department of Justice Amber Alert National Report, Amber Alert system's recovers 90 percent of missing children within 72 hours.

We now need a similar system in place for Wisconsin citizens who have Alzheimer's or Dementia – and that is why the Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups and the Alzheimer's and Dementia Alliance of Wisconsin are supporting AB 710.

According to the bipartisan sponsors AB 710, this bill would establish an alert system similar to the current Amber Alert System in Wisconsin, especially for those diagnosed with Alzheimer's or Dementia, regardless of their age.

At least 21 states have Silver Alert Systems for missing senior citizens, according to the Alzheimer's Foundation of America. Now it's time for Wisconsin to do the same but without a set age, since young adults and middle-aged citizens of Wisconsin can have early stages of Dementia and Alzheimer's.

We all understand, that people who go missing are someone's loved one, someone's mother, brother, father or sister - so let's leverage Wisconsin's current missing children system and work together in solving missing persons, who have Dementia or Alzheimer's, before a similar tragedy like Mary Black, happens in Wisconsin.

Wisconsin's Amber Alert System has successfully worked for children who have been abducted, so it only makes common sense, that we do the same for Wisconsin citizens who have Dementia and Alzheimer's.

Thank you for your consideration and for the Bi-partisan support for AB 710.

Sincerely,



A.J. Nino Amato, CWAG President/CEO

2850 Dairy Drive, Suite 100 - Madison WI 53718

(C) 608-514-3317 / namato@cwag.org