

The Honorable Jerry Moran  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Culberson  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable José Serrano  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Shelby, Ranking Member Shaheen, Chairman Culberson, and Ranking Member Serrano:

As organizations that advocate on behalf of people with disabilities and individuals living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, we want to first thank both the House and Senate subcommittees for including \$2 million for fiscal year 2019 under State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance to address wandering, which is one of the most pressing safety issues facing our communities. As you finalize the fiscal year 2019 bill, we also hope you will consider following the Senate bill and report with respect to this funding by specifically referencing Kevin and Avonte's Law.

Kevin and Avonte's Law (Division Q of P.L. 115-141), which was enacted earlier this year, reauthorized and updated the old *Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Alert Program* as the *Missing Americans Alert Program*. This change was made to address not only those living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, but also those with developmental disabilities, such as autism. The bill garnered bipartisan support in Congress and our organizations heralded its passage because the impact of wandering has been so devastating in our communities.

More than 60 percent of those living with Alzheimer's or other dementias will wander, and up to half of those who do wander will suffer serious injury or death if not found within 24 hours. One in three children with autism and one in four children with intellectual disability wander *each year*. Nearly a third of the reported autism related wandering/elopement cases were fatal or required some level of medical attention. Children under 5 faced the highest risk with cases ending in death nearly 60% of the time. The namesakes of Kevin and Avonte's Law, Kevin Curtis Willis and Avonte Oquendo, were boys with autism who drowned after wandering.

In order to effectively carry out Kevin and Avonte's Law, and to prevent any confusion at the agency level, we hope you will address this item in conference. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Alzheimer's Association  
Alzheimer's Foundation of America  
Alzheimer's Impact Movement  
American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR)  
American Psychological Association  
Autism Society  
Autism Speaks  
Easterseals  
National Alliance for Caregiving  
National Association for Children's Behavioral Health  
National Autism Association  
National Down Syndrome Society  
SafeMinds  
The ARC  
The Color of Autism Foundation