



April 23, 2007

The Honorable Charles W. Boustany, Jr.  
1117 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Boustany:

AARP is pleased to endorse the bipartisan resolution that you are sponsoring with Representative Herseth Sandlin regarding Long-Term Care Awareness Week and commends your efforts to raise awareness about this important issue.

Public education is a vital part of long-term care (LTC) awareness. The goal should be that Americans think of long-term care as a critical part of retirement planning to help them achieve greater health and financial security. Yet, many people have more immediate financial needs, are in denial that they might need long-term care, underestimate the costs of services, and inaccurately believe that Medicare covers the costs of long-term care.

According to a 2006 AARP survey on long-term care costs, six in ten people (59%) age 45+ say they think Medicare covers an extended nursing home stay, yet it does not. In addition, less than a quarter of people age 45+ could come close to correctly estimating the monthly cost of an assisted living facility. AARP is working to educate our members and the public about long-term care, such as through our publications, consumer tip sheets and guides, and our long-term care web page: <http://www.aarp.org/longtermcare>.

Many individuals may be caring for a loved one, but individuals should also think about what services they would want and discuss it with their family. Learning about LTC, the likelihood of needing services, the range and costs of available services and supports, how to plan and pay for them, and where to go for further information are important steps. It is also worth noting that many long-term care decisions are made under stress, even with planning.

Taking action now can increase the chance that individuals will have greater independence and control over their lives and get the quality services they need in the setting of their choice. Most people who need LTC strongly prefer to remain in their homes.

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We look forward to working with you to raise awareness about LTC. If you have any further questions, please feel free to call me or have your staff contact Rhonda Richards on our Federal Affairs staff at (202) 434-3770.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David P. Sloane". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

David P. Sloane  
Sr. Managing Director  
Government Relations and Advocacy