

SB 185, Security for Colorado Seniors
House Health & Insurance Committee
4/27/22

Coral Cosway, Sr. Director of Public Policy & Advocacy
Alzheimer's Association of Colorado
Position: Support

The Alzheimer's Association of Colorado strongly supports SB 185 and asks for your "yes" vote.

I want to start by thanking our state Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) for the services and support they provide to Colorado's older adults, some of whom are living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. Roughly 65% of people living with dementia live in the community, as opposed to a facility setting, and some of these Coloradans are currently being served by the AAA network. We are grateful for their hard work and dedication that enables these neighbors and loved ones to live in the community.

However, our state's aging needs are wider and more diverse than the programs provided by our AAAs. We appreciate the more expansive vision included in this bill that would allow grant funds to be distributed to other organizations based on the work of the Strategic Action Planning Group on Aging and the newly-modified Commission on Aging. We believe this provides maximum flexibility for our state to address the needs of older Coloradans.

I also want to thank the bill sponsors for adding the term "equity" into the description of the projects the grant funds are intended to support. This is of particular importance to the Coloradans we represent and serve because older Black and Hispanic Americans are disproportionately more likely than older White Americans to have dementia. In fact:

- Black Americans are about twice as likely, and
- Hispanic Americans are about 1 and ½ times more likely.
- Additionally, both of these groups are:
 - More likely to be diagnosed in the later stages of the disease, and
 - Are less likely to participate in dementia-related clinical trials.

We want to thank the bill sponsors for moving this important bill and, once again, ask for your "yes" vote on SB 185.

SB 185, Security for Colorado Seniors
House Health & Insurance Committee
5/2/22

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Alzheimer's Association of Colorado
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