

Testimony in Support of AB337
Presented by Jessica Padron
State Advocacy Director, AARP Nevada
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Chair Brown-May, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jessica Padron and I serve as the State Advocacy Director for AARP Nevada. On behalf of our AARP members and caregivers statewide, I am honored to testify in strong support of AB337.

Dementia is a growing public health crisis, affecting nearly 55,000 Nevadans living with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. This number is expected to rise significantly in the coming years, placing increased strain on families, caregivers, and our healthcare system. AB337 is a critical step toward ensuring individuals living with dementia, their caregivers, and families receive the comprehensive support and resources they need.

AARP has long advocated for policies that support family caregivers, recognizing that they are the backbone of long-term care. In Nevada alone, there are over 340,000 family caregivers provide more than \$5.1 billion in unpaid care annually, assisting loved ones with daily activities, medication management, and complex healthcare decisions. AB337 directly addresses the challenges they face by establishing a Dementia Care Specialist Program within the Aging and Disability Services Division.

This program is essential because it will:

1. **Provide Crisis Intervention and Proactive Support** – Caregivers and families often navigate dementia care in isolation, facing unpredictable challenges. Dementia care specialists will offer much-needed guidance, crisis intervention, and tailored resources to help families manage the progression of the disease.
2. **Enhance Access to Culturally Competent Care** – Language barriers and lack of culturally sensitive services disproportionately impact diverse communities. AB337 ensures that individuals with limited English proficiency have access to essential support and interpretation services.
3. **Expand Training and Workforce Development** – The demand for trained dementia care professionals is growing. Through partnerships with local governments, nonprofit organizations, and higher education institutions, this bill will establish a well-trained workforce to support individuals with dementia statewide.

Furthermore, AB337 paves the way for the creation of the Nevada Memory Network, a groundbreaking initiative that will improve early detection, diagnosis, and ongoing care for patients with dementia. By leveraging telehealth and specialized community health workers, this program will expand access to dementia care in both urban and rural communities.

Investing in dementia care today means a healthier, more supported future for Nevada families. By passing AB337, Nevada has the opportunity to be a leader in dementia-friendly policies, ensuring that individuals living with dementia and their caregivers receive the dignity, support, and resources they deserve.

AARP Nevada strongly urges your support for AB337. Thank you for your time and commitment to improving the lives of Nevada's aging population. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Respectfully,

Jessica Padron

State Advocacy Director, AARP Nevada