



## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

November 2021

### ***Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month***

Alzheimer's disease and related dementia are devastating, progressive brain disorders that gradually destroy a person's memory and ability to make judgments and live independently. With the population of older adults in California growing rapidly, the state is leading the nation in promoting brain health and building a path forward for the 690,000 Californians living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia, and those who love and care for them.

California has the largest population of older adults in the nation and by 2030, approximately one in five Californians will be 65 or older – a group representing the full spectrum of our diverse communities. My Administration is taking a holistic, person-centered, equitable approach to ensure Californians can grow old with dignity and respect. We delivered a whole-of-society Master Plan for Aging that is helping communities prepare for this historic demographic change and meet the range of health care, housing and overall services and support needs for older Californians.

We are leveraging our world-leading academic institutions and other resources to advance innovative research to combat age-related brain diseases. In my first State of the State Address, I announced the launch of the Alzheimer's Prevention and Preparedness Task Force, bringing together distinguished scientists and advocates to develop proposals for tackling this challenge. I am proud that, through our record state budget this year, we have been able to take action on important recommendations from the Task Force, including launching a robust public awareness campaign, introducing "Dementia Aware" health screenings in Medi-Cal, training more doctors in geriatrics, opening Alzheimer's Day Centers, simplifying care navigation, accelerating equity-focused research, investing in caregivers and more.

We also recognize the unsung role and many sacrifices of families and health care workers providing care to Californians living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia. Sixty percent of these caregivers in California are women, and many are people of color – a population that is disproportionately impacted by the disease. More than 1.6 million Californians provide care for someone living with Alzheimer's disease, representing millions of hours of unpaid care in 2020 alone.

During National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month, I urge all Californians to stand with those living with this disease as we continue our work to take on the policy, economic and health challenges it poses for our state while better meeting the needs of affected Californians and those who support them.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gavin Newsom".

Gavin Newsom