Proponent Testimony for HB 2536 – Dementia Training for Court Appointed Guardians

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Thank you, Madam Chair Gossage and members of the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee, for allowing me the opportunity to testify regarding HB 2536, Dementia Training for Court Appointed Guardians.

The Alzheimer's Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support and research. Our mission is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. In Kansas, we have two chapters which together serve all 105 counties.

Guardians are appointed by the court when an adult is determined to be impaired by age, illness, or disability, including dementia, and lacks appropriate family or financial resources. In these cases, guardians are entrusted with making significant, life-shaping decisions for individuals who are no longer able to fully make those decisions themselves. Unfortunately, guardians are not currently provided dementia training. We know that the number of those living with Alzheimer's is due to increase by 41% by 2050. The need will continue to increase.

The dementia training in this bill only applies to those guardians who are appointed to those with cognitive decline or dementia. It is available at no cost and is provided online by the Alzheimer's Association taking less than one hour to complete, making it a practical and accessible resource for court-appointed guardians. I ask for your support of HB 2536 to help court appointed guardians better serve individuals with cognitive impairment or dementia.

I will stand for questions at the appropriate time.