



Senator Herb Kohl

United States Senator for Wisconsin



[Home](#) [Biography](#) [News](#) [Issues & Legislation](#) [Constituent Services](#) [Contact Senator Kohl](#) [Unsubscribe](#)

This week a new push in the effort to fight Alzheimer's disease was announced by the Obama Administration, which will immediately make an additional \$50 million available for cutting-edge Alzheimer's research. Additionally, the Administration will be seeking to boost funding for research, outreach and support for Alzheimer's patients and their caregivers by another \$106 million.

Today, as many as 5.1 million Americans suffer from Alzheimer's disease, which is a progressive, irreversible brain disorder that destroys memory and thinking skills. With the American population rapidly aging, the number of people with Alzheimer's disease could triple by 2050.

This week's announcement by the Administration comes on the heels of the National Alzheimer's Project Act, which I cosponsored and was signed into law last year. According to the bill, this new law aims at creating an aggressive and coordinated national plan that seeks to speed the development of treatments that can prevent, halt or reverse the course of Alzheimer's by 2025. It also seeks to improve the early diagnosis of Alzheimer's, and to better coordinate care and treatment for people with Alzheimer's.

As chairman of the Senate Special Committee on Aging, I have worked hard to highlight this issue and push for solutions. In fact, late last year I convened a hearing on the overuse of antipsychotics on frail elders who suffer from dementia, and welcomed testimony from Tom Hlavacek, the Executive Director of the Alzheimer's Association of Southeast Wisconsin.

During his testimony, Mr. Hlavacek said that about 110,000 Wisconsin residents suffered from Alzheimer's disease in 2010, and described some of the most successful and promising approaches to dealing with agitated dementia sufferers without drugs.

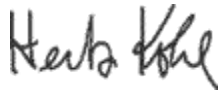
Over the past decade, some of the genetic clues to Alzheimer's disease have also

been discovered. For example, breakthroughs in technology have recently allowed scientists to “see” Alzheimer’s disease living in the brain for the first time, and this should allow researchers to track disease progression and measure potential treatments.

I am also pleased that later this year, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services will release updated, comprehensive training materials on dementia care. It is my hope that this will be a valuable new resource to health and long-term care providers serving vulnerable older adults with Alzheimer’s.

While progress continues to be made, Alzheimer’s disease remains a growing national crisis that we must fully commit to addressing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Herb Kohl". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.