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Good morning and thank you for your time today Mr. Chairman and members of the House of Representatives Appropriations Committee.

As a community partner with the Alzheimer's Association, the Delaware County Office of Services for the Aging is pleased to share with you today the tremendous successes that we have shared since the beginning of the AoA Memory Loss Screening Program.

Upon notification of the grant award, COSA allied with the Delaware Valley Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association to develop a grassroots constituency of community service providers. In particular, we looked for opportunities to build relations with community organizations and leaders in the African American, Latino and Asian communities.

COSA hosted three planning meetings on behalf of the Alzheimer's Association to assist in the awareness, development and actualization of the grant. The meetings were a sell out, with over 35 different community partners represented. Present were leaders from various churches, hospitals, family service centers, civic organizations as well as COSA and Alzheimer's Association staff.

As a result of these meetings, 8 Delaware County memory loss screenings were held, with over 160 people being screened for dementia.

Recognizing the need and value of the AoA program, both the Director of COSA, Louis Colbert and myself personally took the program to our own churches where we also conducted the memory loss screenings. While I have actively worked with the Alzheimer's Association for several years now as a support group facilitator, Louis has also since began an enthusiastic African American support group at his church, Pinn Memorial Baptist. Eight hour comprehensive Family Caregiver trainings have also been provided to congregants in each house of worship. The AoA project is a natural springboard to start and extend services in the African American community.

COSA and the Alzheimer's Association are natural allies. We share a common ideal and embrace an ultimate goal: a world without Alzheimer's disease. We strive shoulder-to-shoulder, confident in one another's ability and commitment to achieve that goal. In the interim we provide families and communities with current, useful information, care and support as they proceed through this journey.

Moreover, given the limited staff capacity, with only 4 people in the Delaware Valley Chapter dedicated to multicultural community outreach in the 7 surrounding Philadelphia counties, we aid in their outreach efforts in Delaware County. The Alzheimer's

Association, in turn, with over 25 years of direct hands-on experience in the Commonwealth, empowers us through their expertise in dementia specific issues, including outreach and care.

The AoA Program is an innovative program that further extends our abilities to serve individuals with dementia, specifically within the multicultural community. As an objective of the proposed State Plan on Aging, the Department of Aging and COSA shares in the concern and effort to further reach into multicultural communities.

It would be a great loss to the communities as well as the community organizations involved if the program were not finished. However, one constant shall remain when the program does indeed go away, the community bridge. At the local level, we have built a strong foundation between the Area Office on Aging and the Alzheimer's Association for future endeavors. We have created a cohesive aging network that will continue to successfully partner to provide services to older Pennsylvanians.

Thank you for your time.