

Hello, Everyone. My name is Darryll Rudy, and I'm here to share why Vermont should allocate \$500,000 to the Dementia Respite Grant.

Like more than **13,000** other Vermonters over the age of 65, I have Alzheimer's.

I live in St. Johnsbury with my partner, Barb. I want to spend the rest of my life there...with Barb... *in our home*.

In Vermont there are over **20,000** unpaid dementia family caregivers like Barb. All of them are dealing with a disease that is long and complex. They are at greater risk for anxiety, depression, and poorer quality of life than caregivers of people with other conditions.

35.4% of Vermont's dementia caregivers report depression. This is among the highest percent in the nation. 61.5% have one or more chronic health conditions, a number that also is above the national average. Expanding the Dementia Respite Grant is imperative if we want Vermonters with dementia to be able to age in place and if we want their caregivers to remain healthy.

While I'm still high functioning, I know that Barb will have a heavy load as my disease progresses. Frankly, I'm speaking to you today because I don't want my condition to put Barb's health at risk.

Please increase the Dementia Respite Grant allocation to \$500,000 so that Barb and thousands of other dementia family caregivers can continue caring for their loved ones at home.

Thank you.