

S.242

Introduced by Senators Brock, Gulick, Hardy and Lyons

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Human services; appropriations; dementia respite grant program;
dementia capable activities

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to appropriate
funds for the dementia respite grant program and to establish a pilot program
that creates or expands dementia capable activities in certain counties.

An act relating to dementia respite and dementia capable programming

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. FINDINGS

The General Assembly finds that:

(1) according to the Alzheimer Association's 2025 Vermont

Alzheimer's Statistics, there are:

(A) 12,800 Vermonters over 65 years of age with Alzheimer's

Disease; and

(B) 20,000 unpaid caregivers in Vermont providing a combined total

of 29 million hours of care annually, which totals \$773,000,000.00 in unpaid

1 care, 61.5 percent of whom have chronic health conditions themselves and
2 35.4 percent of whom have depression;

3 (2) according to the Department of Health, one in four caregivers spend
4 40 or more hours per week on dementia-related caregiving responsibilities;

5 (3) according to the Alzheimer's Association's 2021 Behavioral Risk
6 Factor Surveillance System, 71.1 percent of Vermont's dementia caregivers are
7 women, 23.6 percent of Vermont's dementia caregivers are also caring for a
8 child, and 52.8 percent of Vermont's dementia caregivers have been providing
9 care for two or more years;

10 (4) according to the Alzheimer's Association, 57 percent of employed
11 dementia caregivers had to go into work late, leave early, or take time off due
12 to caregiving demands;

13 (5) according to the Alzheimer's Association, the total lifetime cost of
14 care for a person living with dementia is approximately \$405,262.00; and

15 (6) Vermont's Dementia Respite Grant is distributed by the Department
16 of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living to the five area agencies on
17 aging to support unpaid family caregivers and may be used for services such as
18 in-home care and adult day services, but is not available to individuals
19 receiving Choices for Care or receiving caregiver support through the Veterans
20 Independence, Attendant Services, or National Family Caregiver Support
21 programs.

1 Sec. 2. APPROPRIATION; DEMENTIA RESPITE GRANT PROGRAM

2 (a) In fiscal year 2027, \$750,000.00 shall be appropriated from the General
3 Fund to the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living for
4 distribution to the Vermont Association of Area Agencies on Aging to fund the
5 Vermont Dementia Respite Grant.

6 (b) Twenty percent of the grant shall be used to fund “out-of-home day”
7 respite care, including adult day programs, meaning care provided in a group
8 setting outside the home during daytime hours.

9 (c) Individuals with dementia with an annual income at or below 400
10 percent of the federal poverty level shall be eligible for grant funds under this
11 section. Funds shall be capped at \$3,000.00 per person for fiscal year 2027.

12 (d) Each area agency on aging shall maintain a waitlist for services funded
13 through this grant program. Funding shall be available on a first-come, first-
14 served basis.

15 Sec. 3. APPROPRIATION; DEMENTIA CAPABLE SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

16 (a) In fiscal year 2027, \$100,000.00 shall be appropriated from the General
17 Fund to the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living to
18 establish a one-year pilot program to create or expand dementia capable social
19 activities in Rutland and Washington Counties. The grant shall be
20 administered by the Department’s State Dementia Services Coordinator, in

1 consultation with the Commission on Alzheimer's Disease and Related
2 Disorders established pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 3085b.

3 (b) The State Dementia Services Coordinator shall award four grants of
4 \$25,000.00 to community organizations in Rutland and Washington Counties,
5 such as senior centers, libraries, recreation departments, and meal sites,
6 providing dementia capable social activities. The State Dementia Services
7 Coordinator shall prioritize activities serving individuals with cognitive
8 impairment or dementia and that support brain health. Successful grant
9 applicants shall have completed training in communicating with and
10 developing activities for individuals with dementia and other cognitive
11 disorders.

12 Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

13 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.