

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 271

Designating June 15, 2023, as “World Elder Abuse Awareness Day” and the month of June as “Elder Abuse Awareness Month”.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 22, 2023

Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

RESOLUTION

Designating June 15, 2023, as “World Elder Abuse Awareness Day” and the month of June as “Elder Abuse Awareness Month”.

Whereas, in 2021, approximately 55,000,000 residents of the United States, or about 1 in every 6 individuals, have attained the age of 65, and by 2060, 95,000,000 individuals in the United States will be over the age of 65 according to estimates by the Bureau of the Census;

Whereas elder abuse remains a challenging problem and can come in many different forms, often manifesting as physical, sexual, or psychological abuse, financial exploitation, neglect, and social media abuse;

Whereas elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation have no boundaries and cross all racial, social, class, gender, and geographic lines, according to the Elder Justice Coalition;

Whereas more than 1 in 10 individuals in the United States over the age of 60 have been subjected to abuse each year, with many such victims enduring abuse in multiple forms, according to the American Journal of Public Health;

Whereas most reported cases of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of older adults take place within private homes, and approximately 90 percent of the perpetrators in elder financial exploitation cases are family members or other trusted individuals, according to the National Adult Protective Services Association;

Whereas research suggests that elderly individuals in the United States who experience cognitive impairment, physical disabilities, or isolation are more likely to become the victims of abuse than those who do not experience cognitive impairment, physical disabilities, or isolation;

Whereas other risk factors for elder abuse can include low social support, poor physical health, and experience of previous traumatic events, according to the National Center on Elder Abuse;

Whereas close to half of elderly individuals who suffer from dementia will experience abuse during their lifetime, according to the Department of Justice;

Whereas only 1 in 24 cases of elder abuse is reported, according to the New York State Office of Children and Family Services;

Whereas the Population Reference Bureau estimates that 1,900,000 elders will live in nursing homes by 2030;

Whereas, in a 2012 study conducted by Michigan State University, approximately 24 percent of the nursing home

residents who participated in the study reported at least one incident of physical abuse by nursing home staff;

Whereas, on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, the United States mourns the loss of elderly individuals who perished in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities during the COVID–19 pandemic;

Whereas the COVID–19 pandemic has led to the emergence of new scams against older adults, including those related to vaccines;

Whereas there has been an increase in hate crimes committed against older, Asian Americans during the COVID–19 pandemic;

Whereas, within the last 3 years, Congress passed and the President signed 2 measures that make nearly \$400,000,000 available for implementation of Elder Justice Act of 2009 (42 U.S.C. 1395i–3a et seq.) initiatives, the largest funding stream related to such initiatives in the history of the Act; and

Whereas Congress, in passing the Elder Justice Act of 2009 (42 U.S.C. 1395i–3a et seq.), the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.), the Elder Abuse Prevention and Prosecution Act (34 U.S.C. 21701 et seq.), the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (Public Law 117–2), and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (Public Law 116–260), recognized the importance of protecting older people of the United States against abuse and exploitation: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

1 (1) designates June 15, 2023, as “World Elder
2 Abuse Awareness Day” and the month of June as
3 “Elder Abuse Awareness Month”;

4 (2) recognizes—

5 (A) judges, lawyers, adult protective serv-
6 ices professionals, law enforcement officers, so-
7 cial workers, health care providers, advocates
8 for victims, and other professionals and agen-
9 cies for their efforts to advance awareness of
10 elder abuse;

11 (B) the important work of the Elder Jus-
12 tice Coordinating Council, which has continued
13 through the previous 2 Administrations and in-
14 volves 15 different Federal agencies;

15 (C) the essential work done by adult pro-
16 tective services personnel, who regularly came
17 to the assistance of victims, investigated reports
18 of abuse, and actively prevented future victim-
19 ization of older people in the United States, es-
20 pecially during the COVID–19 pandemic as the
21 social isolation of elderly individuals due to
22 stay-at-home orders only increased the risk of
23 abuse and neglect; and

24 (D) the importance of supporting State
25 long-term care ombudsman programs, which

1 help prevent elder abuse and neglect in nursing
2 homes and other long-term care facilities, where
3 infection prevention and control deficiencies
4 pose persistent challenges;

5 (3) applauds the work of the Elder Justice Coa-
6 lition, and its members, whose efforts to increase
7 public awareness of elder abuse have the potential to
8 increase the identification and reporting of this
9 crime by the public, professionals, and victims, and
10 can act as a catalyst to promote issue-based edu-
11 cation and long-term prevention; and

12 (4) encourages—

13 (A) members of the public and profes-
14 sionals who work with older adults to act as
15 catalysts to promote awareness and long-term
16 prevention of elder abuse—

17 (i) by reaching out to local adult pro-
18 tective services agencies, State long-term
19 care ombudsman programs, and the Na-
20 tional Center on Elder Abuse; and

21 (ii) by learning to recognize, detect,
22 report, and respond to elder abuse;

23 (B) private individuals and public agencies
24 in the United States to continue work together
25 at the Federal, State, and local levels to combat

1 abuse, neglect, exploitation, crime, and violence
2 against vulnerable adults, including vulnerable
3 older adults, particularly in light of limited re-
4 sources for vital protective services; and

5 (C) those Federal agencies with responsi-
6 bility for preventing elder abuse to fully exercise
7 such responsibilities to protect older adults,
8 whether living in the community or in long-term
9 care facilities.

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