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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2835**

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**State of Washington 64th Legislature 2016 Regular Session**

**By** House Health Care & Wellness (originally sponsored by Representatives Tharinger, Cody, Johnson, Harris, Appleton, Fey, Kilduff, and Goodman)

AN ACT Relating to creating a purple card alert system; and adding a new chapter to Title 70 RCW.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The legislature finds that Washington state's elderly population is growing and the number of individuals with dementia is increasing.

(2) The legislature finds that more than one hundred thousand, or about two percent, of Washington residents exhibit symptoms of dementia.

(3) The legislature further finds that it is important that families and individuals caring for individuals with dementia be able to function in the community while caring for an individual with dementia.

(4) The legislature further finds that first responders, government officials, those in the business community, and others in the community benefit from knowing when they are interacting with a person with dementia and benefit from information and recommendations on ways to interact with people with dementia.

(5) The legislature recognizes the work that has been done in creating a state Alzheimer's plan and that concerns about the community interacting with individuals with dementia should be a part of that plan.

(6) It is the intent of the legislature to utilize the existing structure of the state Alzheimer's plan to address the creation and promotion of voluntary information systems to: (a) Help first responders, businesses, government officials, and others in the community to be aware that the individual they are interacting with has special needs related to dementia; and (b) assist unpaid caregivers when taking an individual with dementia into the community.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Dementia" means a chronic or persistent disorder of the mental processes caused by brain disease or injury and marked by memory disorders, personality changes, and impaired reasoning.

(2) "Department" means the department of social and health services.

(3) "First responders" means police officers and firefighters.

(4) "Unpaid caregiver" means a spouse, relative, or friend who has primary responsibility for the care of an adult with a functional disability and who does not receive financial compensation for the care.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The department, as an integral part to the development and implementation of the state Alzheimer's plan pursuant to section 1, chapter 89, Laws of 2014, shall work to ensure that the following considerations regarding a purple card information system are addressed as part of the plan's next generation Alzheimer's disease and dementia advisory group:

(a) Development of a purple-colored card with information indicating that the companion of the person giving the card is asking the receiver of the card to be understanding and accommodating to the person with dementia. The advisory group should also consider if there are similar cards available through community organizations;

(b) Creation and implementation of a public information plan to alert first responders, government officials, businesses, and others in the community of the purple card information system to advise individuals of their potential interaction with a person with dementia and provide recommendations for accommodating and assisting the person with dementia, while also increasing awareness about other information or alert systems available to ensure safety and quick return of adults who wander. These include, but are not limited to, medic alert, safe return, project lifesaver, and silver alert programs;

(c) Investigation of the rights and limits related to privacy, such as unpaid caregivers not having the authority to disclose medical information without consent of the individual, as well as federal and state privacy laws. Additionally, the advisory group should examine issues surrounding identifying individuals with dementia and whether that identification could lead to exploitation of the individual; and

(d) Development and implementation of a plan for voluntary cooperation by local, state, tribal, and government agencies, radio and television stations, cable and satellite systems, newspapers and other publications, and businesses to enhance the public's ability to assist people with dementia and to advise others who interact with persons with dementia of the need to accept and accommodate the person with dementia. This plan should include, at minimum, information about the purple card information system and wandering return programs.

(2) Nothing in this section precludes an organization from developing a card or promoting the awareness of the use of cards to assist individuals with dementia, unpaid caregivers, first responders, or others in the community.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Sections 1 through 3 of this act constitute a new chapter in Title 70 RCW.

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