

August 9, 2012

The Honorable Ed Reyes
Chair, Los Angeles City Council
Planning and Land Use Management Committee
200 N. Spring Street, Room 410
Los Angeles, CA 90012



RE: 6221 Fallbrook Avenue
Case No ZA 2011-2679 (ELD) (SPR)-1A

Dear Councilman Reyes:

I am writing on behalf of the Alzheimer's Association, California Southland Chapter (serving the greater Los Angeles area) and on behalf of the thousands of families we represent. As you may be aware, there are an estimated 39,000 individuals suffering from Alzheimer's disease within our city limits - 156,000 in Los Angeles County. While most of these individuals reside at home or with their families, roughly 20%, as many as 7,800 frail older adults, in our city live in *service rich* assisted living environments, many of which exceed 100 residents. There is a growing need for these residential care facilities in most communities in Los Angeles, and elsewhere. By 2030, the number of people with Alzheimer's disease is expected to double. High quality, personalized care facilities are essential, and we need your help so that our grandparents, parents, siblings, and in some instances, children have the opportunity to live as independently as possible and remain in their own neighborhoods despite a diagnosis of Alzheimer's.

Established single family neighborhoods are often the ideal location for the services offered by licensed and well-staffed residential care facilities for the elderly (RCFE). At these facilities, individualized care for those living with the disease is provided in a home-like environment. These facilities help those with Alzheimer's, and their loved ones and caregivers, better navigate the transition from home and are also a much more humane option for the residents than institutional care, particularly when they are close to home.

While residents in single family communities may have reason to be concerned when substance abusers or certain diagnosed mentally ill move into their neighborhoods, there is no reason to be fearful or concerned about residents in licensed and well-staffed RCFEs. These residents do not negatively affect the character of local neighborhoods. **As we think of our own parents and grandparents, we must ask ourselves where we would want them to live out the final days of their lives.** Clearly, most of us want our loved ones cared for in an intimate environment that resembles their own homes. Being allowed to live our remaining lives with dignity, in our own neighborhoods, is the choice that all us would prefer to make for ourselves, and for our loved ones who are no longer able to make that choice on their own.

I urge you to consider the needs of our frail citizens with Alzheimer's disease, as well as the needs of their caregivers, and support their right to live in their own neighborhoods in licensed and well-staffed RCFE communities.

With warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Susan M. Galeas".

Susan M. Galeas, MSW, MPH
President and CEO

cc: Members of the Los Angeles City Council PLUM Committee (08/14/12), The Honorable Dennis Zine, Charlie Rausch, Fernando Tovar, Dan Chandler, Ken Barry

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