

# alzheimer's association™

## MEDIA ALERT

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**For Immediate Release:**  
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### **Beebe, Law Enforcement Announce Arkansas Silver Alert** *Alzheimer's Association Supports Program to Benefit Adults with Cognitive Impairment*

Little Rock – On April 6 at 11:00 a.m. in the Governor's Conference Room, Governor Mike Beebe will announce the Arkansas Silver Alert, established through a mutual agreement of the Arkansas State Police, Arkansas Sheriffs' Association and Arkansas Association of Chiefs of Police. The Arkansas State Police will host an Internet web site that will provide Arkansas broadcasters and news organizations a means to receive Arkansas Silver Alerts.

The Alzheimer's Association commends Representative Butch Wilkins for leading the effort to establish an Arkansas Silver Alert Program. One of the freshman legislator's chief reasons for bringing this issue forward has to do with his personal experience as a caregiver for wife, Pat, and his mother-in-law, both Alzheimer's patients.

"Pat was diagnosed six years ago, and it just changes your life in every way," Wilkins said. "Silver Alert can help families get information out quickly to reunite them with their loved ones. Part of the alert will be to encourage caregivers to keep updated photos and important information around to provide to law enforcement if a situation arises."

According to the 2009 Alzheimer's Association Fact & Figures, 6 out of 10 people with Alzheimer's disease will wander from their homes or caregiving facilities at some point as the disease progresses. If not found within a 24-hour period, up to half will suffer serious injury or death. Even in one's own neighborhood or a place that is familiar, the person living with Alzheimer's may become disoriented and lost, and 94 percent of people with Alzheimer's disease who wander are found within just over a mile from his or her place of residence or last location seen.

"We are delighted to partner with the states' law enforcement leadership to ensure peace of mind for families and professional caregivers of those with a dementia diagnosis. This shared vision will heighten awareness, increase compassion and assist in a timely safe return of our loved ones," said Sandra Warmack, State Director for the Alzheimer's Association.

As the threat of Alzheimer's disease continues to touch more people's lives, the safety and security of those with Alzheimer's or dementia-related illnesses will continue to be a concern to us all. In order to address this growing population, the Alzheimer's Association remains committed to working with lawmakers to ensure that safety issues are raised in the context of comprehensive federal and state Alzheimer's disease planning that better acknowledges the unique needs of the cognitively impaired. The most effective system will include collaboration and cooperation between families, all levels of government and organizations that support local communities, like the Alzheimer's Association.

**For more information about Arkansas Silver Alert and the press conference, contact Allison Hogue of the Alzheimer's Association at (501) 265-0027 or [allison.hogue@alz.org](mailto:allison.hogue@alz.org).**

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The Alzheimer's Association is the largest voluntary health organization in the country with the dual mission of conquering Alzheimer's disease through research and enhancing care and support for people with the disease, their families, and caregivers. The Association provides a 24-hour Helpline (1-800-272-3900), support groups, education programs, care consultation, information and referral, Safe Return (a national program to help find people with dementia who become lost). For more information about Alzheimer's disease visit [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org).