



## News Release

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### ***AD FED LAUNCHES BOLD STATEWIDE “WE CAN” PREVENT ALZHEIMER’S CAMPAIGN IN FLORIDA***

**Heightening public awareness of health crisis faced by Florida’s aging population -- and how to avert it -- is focus of advertising group’s new year-long public service campaign**

**TALLAHASSEE, FL** – Alzheimer’s disease receives far less research funding than other major diseases. It could bankrupt the state’s public health system over the coming years if left unaddressed. And it continues to claim the lives of many thousands of Floridians each year.

Yet there is hope. Experts believe prevention of Alzheimer’s is possible by 2020.

That’s the message behind the Fourth District American Advertising Federation’s statewide “We CAN Cure Alzheimer’s Now” campaign being launched today in Tallahassee.

Nairn’ B. Gillet, the district federation’s governor, said the campaign will include a mix of member-donated high-profile print, broadcast and social media, as well as a public information website, [www.WeCanFl.org](http://www.WeCanFl.org).

Members in all 23 branches of the AAF group – a membership organization of advertising professionals in Florida and the Caribbean – are donating their professional time free-of-charge to the project and partnering with local Alzheimer’s groups on the ads. They’re urging their colleagues in print and broadcast media to carry the ads free-of-charge as Public Service Announcements.

“Our members saw an urgent need to step up,” Nairn’ said. “This is a looming crisis of the first order and people are getting too little information about it, just as they know too little about the stunning advances in treatment and early detection of the disease.

“The size of our state’s aging population and the fact so many Baby Boomers are now entering their retirement years is a wake-up call. Hundreds of thousands of Floridians are suffering from some form of dementia and memory impairment today. What people don’t know is that we can spare others this fate if we all work together to find the prevention experts say is within reach.”

Members of the Florida Legislature, some of whom are sponsoring Alzheimer’s-related bills in the current session, were anticipated to join members of the Advertising Federation in announcing the campaign’s launch.

Rep. Rachel Burgin, R-Brandon, is among the lawmakers applauding the new campaign.

“Alzheimer’s is a family disease that’s taking a toll on Florida families, business and communities,” she said. “There is progress being made and early diagnosis is essential. I am pleased to be a part of this statewide education campaign the Fourth District American Advertising Federation is kicking off here today. I know this: Together we *can* cure Alzheimer’s now.”

Among the Alzheimer’s disease-related bills before the Legislature this session are measures that would:

- Establish a “Purple Ribbon Task Force” reporting to the governor and Legislature on planning for the Alzheimer’s crisis. [CS/HB 473, Rep. Hudson / SB682, Senator Richter]
- Create grants and a public education program in the Department of Elderly Affairs to promote screening for memory impairment. [SB316, Senator Wise, HB1035, Rep. Cruz]
- Require the licensure of adult day care centers that provide specialized Alzheimer’s care. [SB 694, Senator Fasano / HB 529 Rep. Corcoran]

Alzheimer’s expert Dr. David Morgan, CEO of the USF Health Byrd Alzheimer’s Institute, also joined the federation and lawmakers for the announcement.

The USF institute recently opened a state-of-the-art comprehensive assessment center for the care and treatment of Alzheimer’s patients. The institute also is unique in having acquired its own PET scanner, essential technology for the early detection of the disease.

“As Alzheimer’s researchers we’re appreciative of any and all efforts to elevate public awareness” Morgan said. “Today, 1 in 40 Floridians have the disease and there’s no cure and no prevention. We have more people over the age of 65 than any other state. The numbers speak for themselves. A growing number of Floridians will develop Alzheimer’s. But given the resources researchers can turn the tables on this disease. We’re virtually certain of it.”

For more information go to:

[www.WeCANFl.org](http://www.WeCANFl.org)

**The American Advertising Federation (AAF)**, headquartered in Washington, D.C., acts as the “Unifying Voice for Advertising.” The AAF is the oldest national advertising trade association, representing 40,000 professionals in the advertising industry.

The AAF Fourth District is comprised of 23 local federations throughout Florida and the Caribbean representing nearly 1,500 members. AAF clubs are found in Daytona Beach, Emerald Coast, Greater Fort Lauderdale (2), Gainesville, Jacksonville, Miami (2), North Central Florida, Orlando, Panama City, Pensacola, Polk County, Space Coast, Sun Coast, Tallahassee, Tampa Bay (2), Treasure Coast and Virgin Islands.