

My name is Lou Olin. I am 84 years old, and I am the sole caregiver for my 87-year-old husband, who has been diagnosed with dementia.

I am deeply concerned about the proposed reduction of respite care hours from 140 to 120 hours. First and foremost, 140 hours is already not enough to stretch across twelve months. Any reduction would make it even more difficult for caregivers like me to maintain the level of care our loved ones need.

My husband and I have worked our entire lives, and the only benefit we are currently eligible for is respite care. As seniors living on a fixed income, caregiving is extremely expensive. The costs—both financially and physically add up quickly, especially when one partner is the sole caregiver.

Respite care provides me with essential relief so that I can attend to my own medical needs and maintain my health. Without this support, my ability to continue caring for my husband safely and effectively is at risk. Respite care is not a luxury—it is a necessity that allows me to continue providing care at home.

I respectfully ask you to consider not reducing the number of respite hours but instead increasing them to an amount that will support caregivers throughout the entire fiscal year. This support is vital for seniors like me who rely on respite care to sustain our health and dignity while caring for our loved ones.

Thank you for your time, your consideration, and your understanding.

Respectfully,

Lou Olin