SENATE DOCKET, NO. 548 FILED ON: 1/13/2009

# SENATE . . . . . No. 322

## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the Year Two Thousand Nine**

An Act Relative to a Silver Alert Program to Protect Those with Alzheimers..

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

Whereas, there are an estimated 5.2 million Americans living with Alzheimer's disease, approximately 120,000 of them in Massachusetts. More than 90% are over age 60. The Alzheimer's population is expected to grow to as many as 16 million by 2050. At least 6 of 10 people with Alzheimer's disease or other dementia will wander from their homes or care facilities and become lost at some point in their illness. If not found within 24 hours, up to half will suffer serious injury or death. Thousands of other Massachusetts' residents have related dementias which put them at similar risk.

Chapter 22 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following section:–

SECTION 21. There is hereby created the Silver Alert community response system. The system shall be used in alerting designated Massachusetts communities in cases involving missing and endangered older adults, the majority of whom will have serious memory impairments which may or may not be medically diagnosed.

(a). The Silver Alert community response system shall:

Be used when an adult with a serious memory impairment such as Alzheimer's disease or other dementia is appropriately reported to any police department in Massachusetts as a missing person.

Direct and focus law enforcement and other key response resources in a cost-effective way on a geographic area consistent with the missing person's "Point Last Known" and in accordance with the best available research data.

(b). The Executive Office of Public Safety, in conjunction with the Municipal Police Training Committee shall develop and implement the Silver Alert system in consultation with representatives of the Executive Office of Elder Affairs, Attorney General's Office, Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency, State Police, Chiefs of Police Association, county Sheriff's Departments and District Attorney's Offices, Department of Conservation & Recreation (Rangers), and Massachusetts/New Hampshire Chapter of the National Alzheimer's Association.

(c). All first responders, 911 operators and any other appropriate personnel shall be trained on the Silver Alert system application and protocols; re-training will be included in yearly in-service trainings for these personnel; training will include information about older drivers whose memory impairments may put them at high risk for crashes or becoming lost while driving.

(d). The Executive Office of Public Safety shall develop a plan to ensure that the Silver Alert system will include use of a localized reverse 911 emergency phone system.

(e). The Silver Alert system shall coordinate and be interoperable with the MedicAlert®+Safe Return Program® in use by the Alzheimer's Association. The

MedicAlert®+Safe Return Program® is a nationwide patient identification and family support program that also provides first respondents with vital medical history and is supported locally by the MA/NH Chapter