



July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## **Ranking Member Kirsten Gillibrand's Opening Statement “Awareness to Action: Combatting Elder Abuse and Neglect”**

*Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I really appreciate holding today's hearing and hearing from these experts. Elder abuse and neglect is a serious problem that impacts far too many older adults in our communities and in long-term care settings.*

*What is worse is that only 1 in 24 cases of elder abuse are ever reported to the authorities, suggesting this is much more widespread than ever realized. It is a complicated and intimate issue, but what is clear is that we need to ensure the systems to prevent and combat it are strengthened and protected.*

*Many of these systems are currently housed or supported by the Administration for Community Living, such as the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, protection advocacy agencies, and Adult Protective Services. As the Administration plans its reorganization of the Administration for Community Living and Congress considers reauthorizing*

*the Older Americans Act, it is crucial that these important programs remain available to seniors who depend on them.*

*Today, we will hear about how these programs work together with law enforcement to prevent and combat elder abuse. We will also hear about how Congress can empower law enforcement to prevent financial abuse as frauds and scams evolve to include new technologies, including blockchain, cryptocurrency, and A.I. In 2024, older Americans represented the largest demographic group affected by cryptocurrency fraud, losing over \$2.8 billion.*

*To address this, I am introducing a bipartisan bill called the Guarding Unprotected Aging Retirees from Deception, or the GUARD, Act, which Senator Britt and Chairman Scott co-sponsored with me. I am proud to champion this important legislation, which will equip law enforcement with the tools and flexibility it needs to combat financial fraud and abuse in the modern age.*

*I look forward to hearing from our witnesses about ways we can reinforce our existing defenses against elder abuse and pioneer new and innovative approaches in that vein to end this disgraceful practice.*

*Thank you, Chairman.*