WHEREAS, family caregivers are people who take care of essential tasks for a loved one age 18 or older on a routine basis, so they can remain at home rather than moving to a care facility, including personal care, meal preparation, medical appointments, household chores, bill paying, errands, repairs, and emotional support and reassurances; and

WHEREAS, the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services estimates that there are 600,000–850,000 unpaid caregivers in Washington state, and approximately 30 percent live in Seattle and King County, making family caregivers the backbone of our long-term care system; and

WHEREAS, the Seattle Human Services Department (HSD) Aging and Disability Services (ADS) division, as the Area Agency on Aging for Seattle and King County, coordinates and trains Community Living Connections network providers to answer questions and provide resources related to aging, disabilities, and caregiving; and

WHEREAS, HSD/ADS caregiver support specialists provide information and referrals for training, support groups, and respite care; coach caregivers; and participate in problem-solving with them; and

WHEREAS, the incidence of Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias is growing, and an increasing number of families provide memory care for a loved one at home; and

WHEREAS, through Dementia-Friendly Recreation—a Seattle Parks and Recreation program—and collaboration with Momentia Seattle, the Alzheimer’s Association, UW Medicine/Brain Health & Wellness Center, and the Washington State Dementia Action Collaborative, the City of Seattle provides programs to help people living with memory loss and their caregivers stay active and socially connected; and

WHEREAS, while caregiving can be one of life’s most rewarding experiences, most family caregivers experience significant stress, frustration, anxiety, and exhaustion, and potentially anger and depression, as they balance work and family responsibilities and personal time; ensure safety; make end-of-life decisions; and manage challenging behaviors and conditions such as memory loss and incontinence; and

WHEREAS, many unpaid caregivers experience financial stress due to lost wages and out-of-pocket expenses, and have difficulty recruiting and managing consistent respite care and other support services; and
WHEREAS, Seattle-King County participates in Washington State’s Medicaid Transformation demonstration project that allows additional services for older people and their caregivers when the person receiving care has low income and few assets but may or may not qualify for Medicaid; and

WHEREAS, November is national Family Caregiver Support Month; and

WHEREAS, African Americans are two to three times more likely to have Alzheimer’s disease than the non-Hispanic white population, and are more likely to be misdiagnosed or diagnosed with Alzheimer’s in the later stages of the disease. The Mayor’s Council on African American Elders, Age Friendly Seattle, Seattle Human Services, and community partners present an annual African American Caregiver Forum in November that focuses on memory care;

THEREFORE, THE MAYOR OF SEATTLE AND SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL DO HEREBY PROCLAIM NOVEMBER 2022 TO BE

Family Caregiver Support Month in Seattle

We recognize family caregivers as contributors to the strength of families and communities; we encourage individuals who can provide respite for a family caregiver to do so; and we encourage all Seattle residents to take time to learn about services that can support their physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing.

Mayor Bruce Harrell

Council President Debora Juarez

Councilmember Lisa Herbold

Councilmember Andrew J. Lewis

Councilmember Tammy J. Morales

Councilmember Teresa Mosqueda

Councilmember Sara Nelson

Councilmember Alex Pedersen

Councilmember Kshama Sawant

Councilmember Dan Strauss