



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**TESTIMONY OF DELEGATE PAM QUEEN
HB 965 - Maryland Department of Health - Breast Cancer Program -
Eligibility and Public Awareness Campaign
SUPPORT**

Greetings Chair Joseline Pena-Melnyk, Vice-Chair Bonnie Cullison, and members of the Health and Government Operations Committee:

I seek a favorable recommendation for HB 965 - Maryland Department of Health - Breast Cancer Program - Eligibility and Public Awareness Campaign

Problem:

According to Maryland Department of Health's Environmental Public Health tracking, *breast cancer* is the second leading cause of cancer-related death for females in Maryland after lung cancer.

Unfortunately, nationally and in Maryland, there are significant racial disparities between Black women and White women for breast cancer mortality with Black women diagnosed more often at a later stage. Furthermore, according to the CDC, nearly one in 11 women who are diagnosed with breast cancer is younger than 45 years old.

Approach:

HB 965 seeks to *save lives* via early detection of breast cancer by (1) expanding the Maryland Department of Health's Breast Cancer Program to enable women under the age of 45 years who are considered high risk for breast cancer diagnosis based on CDC guidance and prevalence of differences among races; and by (2) developing and implementing a public awareness campaign to encourage eligible individuals to participate in the Department's Breast Cancer Program.

Yes, we know that preventive health care measures have a cost, but I ask you to consider both the *individual* and *societal* costs of late diagnosis resulting in premature death or for late diagnosed breast cancer survivors like me who endured (1) 8 treatment cycles of dense-dose cocktail chemotherapy, (2) a radical mastectomy, (3) 33 radiation treatments, (4) breast reconstruction surgery, and (5) over 5 years of post-cancer medication.

Because early breast cancer detection saves lives, I seek a favorable recommendation for HB 965.