



LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS OF MARYLAND, INC.

The Maryland House of Delegates, 6 Bladen Street, Room 300, Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3185 • 301-858-3185 • 800-492-7122 Ext. 3185 • Fax 410-841-3175 • 301-858-3175 • Black.Caucus@house.state.md.us

March 1, 2024

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Chair

Delegate Jheanelle Wilkins, District 20

1st Vice Chair

Delegate Melissa Wells, District 40

2nd Vice Chair

Delegate Karen R. Toles, District 25

Treasurer

Delegate Marlon Amprey, District 40

Secretary

Delegate Jamila J. Woods, District 26

Financial Secretary

Senator Mary L. Washington, District 43

Chaplain

Senator Joanne C. Benson, District 24

Parliamentarian

Delegate Stephanie Smith, District 45

Executive Director

Ufuoma O. Agarim, J.D.

MEMBERS

Senator Malcolm Augustine, District 47
Senator Benjamin Brooks, District 10
Senator Jill P. Carter, District 41
Senator Nick Charles, District 25
Senator Arthur Ellis, District 28
Senator Antonio L. Hayes, District 40
Senator Michael A. Jackson, District 27
Senator Cory V. McCray, District 45
Senator C. Anthony Muse, District 26
Senator William C. Smith, Jr., District 20
Senator Charles E. Sydnor III, Esq., District 44
Senator Alonzo T. Washington, District 22
Senator Ron Watson, District 23
Delegate Gabriel Acevero, District 39
Delegate Jacqueline T. Addison, District 45
Delegate Tiffany Alston, District 24
Delegate Vanessa E. Atterbeary, District 13
Delegate J. Sandy Bartlett, District 32
Delegate Adrian Baafa, District 23
Delegate Regina T. Boyce, District 43A
Delegate Frank M. Conway, Jr., District 40
Delegate Charlotte Crutchfield, District 19
Delegate Debra Davis, District 28
Delegate Diana M. Fennell, District 47A
Delegate Kevin M. Harris, District 27A
Delegate Andrea Fletcher Harrison, District 24
Delegate Shoneka Henson, District 30A
Delegate Terri L. Hill, District 12
Delegate Marvin E. Holmes, Jr., District 23
Delegate Julian Ivey, District 47A
Delegate Carl Jackson, District 8
Delegate Andre V. Johnson, Jr., District 34A
Delegate Adrienne A. Jones, District 10
Delegate Jazz Lewis, District 24
Delegate Robbyn Lewis, District 46
Delegate Jeffrie E. Long, Jr., District 27B
Delegate Ashanti Martinez, District 22
Delegate Aletheia McCaskill, District 44B
Delegate Bernice Mireku-North, District 14
Delegate Cheryl E. Pasteur, District 11A
Delegate Edith J. Patterson, District 28
Delegate Josseline Pera-Welnyk, District 21
Delegate N. Scott Phillips, District 10
Delegate Pamela Quason, District 14
Delegate Kent Roberson, District 25
Delegate Denise G. Roberts, District 25
Delegate Mike Rogers, District 32
Delegate Malcolm P. Ruff, District 41
Delegate Sherree Sample-Hughes, District 37A
Delegate Gary Simmons, District 12B
Delegate Deni Tavares, District 47B
Delegate Kym Taylor, District 23
Delegate Veronica Turner, District 26
Delegate Jennifer White Holland, District 10
Delegate Nicole A. Williams, District 22
Delegate C.T. Wilson, District 28
Delegate Greg Wims, District 39
Delegate Caylin Young, District 45

Chair Pamela Beidle
3 East Miller Senate Office Bldg.
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Beidle and Members of the Finance Committee,

The Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland strongly supports **Senate Bill 938** - Maryland Department of Health - Public Education Campaign on Prostate, Lung, and Breast Cancer Prevention, which addresses the persistent health disparities impacting communities disproportionately affected by prostate, lung, and breast cancer in Maryland. **This bill is on the 2024 legislative priority agenda of the Black Caucus.**

As we are all aware, cancer continues to be a significant public health concern, with breast cancer ranking as the most diagnosed cancer in Maryland in 2017. Prostate cancer follows as the second most diagnosed, and lung cancer stands as the leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the state, with breast cancer being the third leading cause of cancer death.

Senate Bill 938 is a vital initiative aimed at developing and implementing a comprehensive public education campaign to address the factors contributing to health disparities in communities impacted by these cancers. This bill recognizes the multifaceted nature of these disparities, considering elements such as poverty, socioeconomic status, cultural beliefs, social injustice, and racial bias.

Public education campaigns have proven instrumental in dispelling myths surrounding cancer and promoting knowledge that can lead to more positive outcomes. By providing information on the onset, types, and multifactorial issues related to prostate, lung, and breast cancer, we can empower communities to make informed decisions about their health.

The testimony of Dr. Arthur Burnett from Johns Hopkins University emphasizes the disproportionate impact of prostate cancer on Black men. A public education campaign, as proposed by this legislation, would enhance access to comprehensive evaluations and consultations, ultimately benefiting populations disproportionately affected by this condition.

The American Lung Association's insights on lung cancer in Maryland underscore the need for increased awareness and equitable distribution of information. Senate Bill 938 aligns with the Association's call to action, recognizing that Maryland ranks 36th in the nation for lung cancer screening.

The bill seeks to improve these statistics, ensuring that all communities have access to vital information and resources.

Breast cancer, particularly affecting African American women as the second leading cause of cancer, requires focused attention. Public education campaigns can bridge knowledge gaps, especially regarding the elevated risks associated with life stressors, diabetes, obesity, heart disease, and breastfeeding disparities. Senate Bill 938 is a proactive step toward addressing these issues. A well-executed public campaign allows for collaboration among various agencies, including health providers, social service organizations, and community groups. This collaborative effort can bring together a wealth of resources, making information, programs, and support accessible to underserved populations.

Senate Bill 938 is a commendable effort to address the complexities surrounding prostate, lung, and breast cancer disparities in Maryland. The proposed public education campaign has the potential to save lives, enhance access to crucial resources, and improve overall outcomes for individuals facing these challenging diagnoses. For these reasons, the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland supports **Senate Bill 938** and asks that you vote favorably on this bill.

Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland