

Bill #: State Bill 0272

Committee: Senate Finance Committee

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: February 4, 2026

I am writing to express my support for State Bill 0272, which mandates health insurers, nonprofit health service plans, and managed care organizations providing chemotherapy coverage also cover scalp cooling systems. My name is Sarah Campbell, a lifelong Maryland resident currently living in Calvert County and a 6-year breast cancer survivor who utilized the Paxman Scalp Cooling System in 2020.

I was diagnosed with stage 3 HER2+ breast cancer on January 27, 2020. Due to the aggressive nature of the diagnosis, I started chemotherapy 2.5 weeks later. When I first met with my oncologist, he explained that I would need six rounds of docetaxel and carboplatin before I could have surgery. I learned during my pre-chemo “class” at Anne Arundel Medical Center that hair-loss is a guaranteed side effect from these two chemotherapy drugs. My initial fear at diagnosis was that I would not live to raise my daughters, who were ages 2 and 4 at the time. Once I understood my full treatment plan, I was upset that I would be in various treatment for a year and it was beyond my control to hide it from anyone. While I could minimize the impacts of most side effects to my life, I could not easily hide the hair loss. I was concerned losing my hair would stress my kids, and I wanted to minimize the impacts to them as much as possible. I did not want everyone, from clients I interacted with to parents at drop off; to know I was in cancer treatment. I did not want pitying looks at the store, which people are apt to give, especially when they see you are a mom to young kids. I was not ashamed of the diagnosis, but I was not comfortable with people unexpectedly asking me about it at the time.

The nurse I met with for my pre-chemo “class” introduced me to the Paxman Scalp Cooling System that the hospital had in the infusion center, which I was unaware of, but was a viable solution that could give me some semblance of control over my diagnosis. The Paxman Scalp Cooling System cost for six rounds of chemo was \$1,600 in February 2020. There were many other costs for me to consider when making my decision to scalp cool, including:

- I could not predict the costs for chemo, a bilateral mastectomy, radiation, and 18 rounds of targeted therapy. Spending \$1,600 on the scalp cooling system at the very beginning of my treatment year was hard to justify.
- I knew that I was going to be on a reduced income that year because I was planning to go on short term disability during surgery and radiation in combination with a reduction in hours.

Fortunately, I had two aunts who paid for most of my scalp cooling treatment, making it a reality for me. When I decided to get a pixie hair cut 7 months after my last chemotherapy to even out the regrowth, I learned the parents at drop off thought I made a radical hair cut decision and had no idea I received chemo. I also learned that a lot of people who knew I was going through chemo thought my chemo regimen was not bad because I kept my hair and did not look sick. I am so fortunate I was able

to use the Paxman Scalp Cooling System because it allowed me to share my cancer diagnosis and treatment on my own terms and mask the severity of the illness from my kids. Access to scalp cooling systems should be available to everyone who wants to use them, regardless of cost.

Thank you,
Sarah Campbell
Chesapeake Beach, Maryland