

My name is Lauren Michalski

I am the Executive Director of the MARYLAND-DC Society of Clinical Oncology.

MDCSCO HAS SUBMITTED A LETTER IN SUPPORT OF HB0393. But I am testifying personally.

We greatly appreciate the efforts of Delegate Nkongolo to bring this particular piece in cancer care to the attention of this committee and the Maryland General Assembly. I testified last year and I am happy to submit this in writing this year. I am sorry I cannot attend the hearing.

My cancer was diagnosed in January of 2021 during the COVID lockdown. My surgery was in February. I received chemotherapy that Spring and immunotherapy for a year.

I was offered cold cap therapy, but unfortunately, it was an added cost and added time in the chair. Not yet knowing the final tally of the expenses I was yet to incur, I chose not to have it and did my best to remain positive and grateful for having choices in my battle to beat cancer!

I cut my hair short, but nonetheless, it was brutal to watch what was left, eventually fall out.

As you get used to the new look of your body, post-surgery, **HAIR MATTERS:** emotionally, physically and spiritually.

I am asking this committee to help cancer patients keep this part of their care in their OWN CONTROL and not that of the insurance underwriters and actuaries.

Please give each cancer patient the choice, without financial constraints, and allow for peace of mind as they go through their own journeys. **It's so important!**

Thank you for your time. Stay well.