



Members of the legislature, thank you for the opportunity to speak. Today I ask you to require that every mammography report include whether breast arterial calcifications — BAC — are present. This is not a technicality. It is lifesaving information that we see and readily have on every mammogram and have rigorous and extensive evidence to act on.

BAC are visible deposits in breast arteries that appear on mammograms. Extensive and compelling research links the presence of BAC to a substantially higher risk of heart disease and stroke — the leading causes of death for women. Yet, if radiology reports omit this finding, an important window for prevention closes. Women leave their screening appointments thinking only about cancer when the same image could also reveal a marker that prompts life-saving cardiovascular evaluation, risk reduction strategies, and timely treatment.

Requiring BAC reporting is a low-cost, high-impact policy. It standardizes care. Radiologists would note the presence or absence of BAC, clinicians would receive a clear trigger to assess cardiovascular risk, and patients would be informed and empowered to pursue proven interventions — additional evaluation such as stress tests, coronary artery CT scans, assessment of elevated cholesterol as well smoking cessation, blood pressure and cholesterol control, diabetes management, and tailored medications. This is about actionable medicine: information that changes clinical decisions and reduces morbidity and mortality.

Beyond health outcomes, this is an issue of equity and informed consent. Women deserve to know information we as their physicians have about their health, not only what's convenient to report. We have the information; we owe patients the information and the chance to act.

This legislation also gives Maryland the opportunity to lead the nation. By becoming the first state to require BAC documentation in mammography reports, Maryland would set a new standard in preventive care and women's health — saving lives and serving as a model for other states.

I urge you to pass this simple, evidence-based requirement: mammography reports must document BAC presence or absence. Doing so will align screening with prevention, save lives, and demonstrate that our health system takes women's total health seriously.

Thank you.

Rachel Brem

Chief Medical Officer and Co-Founder, Brem Foundation to Defeat Breast Cancer
Professor and Vice Chair, Department of Radiology
Director, Breast Imaging and Interventional Center, The George Washington University