

February 3, 2026

Maryland General Assembly

Scalp Cooling Bill (HB 0393) Written Testimony

My name is Young J. Lee, MD. I am a medical oncologist specializing in breast cancer and have been board certified for more than 30 years. I currently practice at Luminis Health Anne Arundel Medical Center, where I serve as the Medical Director for Breast and Integrative Oncology.

I have been prescribing scalp cooling therapy for my patients since 2010. I first became aware of scalp cooling and its clinical benefits in 2009, after witnessing a young breast cancer patient successfully preserve her hair despite receiving aggressive chemotherapy. That experience profoundly shaped my perspective on supportive cancer care.

No woman or man wishes to lose their hair as a result of chemotherapy. Hair loss carries a visible stigma of serious illness and publicly signals that a person is undergoing cancer treatment. While hair often regrows several months after chemotherapy is completed, the physical and psychological toll of complete hair loss is significant and long-lasting. Many cancer survivors describe their experience as traumatic, akin to post-traumatic stress disorder. In my professional opinion, chemotherapy-induced alopecia is one of the primary contributors to the lasting emotional scars associated with the cancer journey.

The majority of my patients express strong interest in scalp cooling to preserve their hair; however, only a small number are able to access it due to cost. The emotional devastation of watching clumps of hair fall out is profound and, in my view, unnecessary—particularly when safe, effective technology exists to prevent it. Denying access based solely on affordability is both inequitable and avoidable.

I strongly support universal insurance coverage for scalp cooling therapy, just as chemotherapy itself is covered. This intervention is not cosmetic; it is an evidence-based supportive therapy that meaningfully improves patients' quality of life, dignity, and psychological well-being during cancer treatment.

I commend and thank the legislators who are spearheading this important bill. I remain humbly available to provide any additional expertise or support that may be helpful as you consider this legislation.

Thank you.