



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary
March 21, 2023

The Honorable Melanie Griffith
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
3 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: SB 965 – Breast and Lung Cancer – Establishment of Screening Awareness Program and Insurance Coverage and Cost Sharing – Letter of Support with Amendments

Dear Chair Griffith and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) respectfully submits this letter of support with amendments for Senate Bill (SB) 965 - Breast and Lung Cancer – Establishment of Screening Awareness Program and Insurance Coverage and Cost Sharing. SB 965 establishes a breast and lung cancer screening awareness program in MDH, requires insurers, nonprofit health service plans, and health maintenance organizations to provide coverage for breast and lung cancer diagnostic imaging, and limits the copayment, coinsurance, or deductible requirement for those procedures.

MDH supports efforts to raise awareness of the importance of cancer screening. MDH currently funds local health departments (LHDs) and health systems to provide low-income, uninsured, and underinsured Maryland residents with no-cost breast and lung cancer screening and diagnostic services through the Breast and Cervical Cancer Program and the Cigarette Restitution Fund Cancer Prevention, Education, Screening and Treatment Program. These programs also provide patient navigation services, including transportation assistance, to their clients regardless of insurance status. MDH funding is also used by LHDs and health systems to provide education on cancer screening to the public.

MDH understands that the crossfile of this bill, HB 815, has been amended in the House. Instead of requiring MDH to establish an additional screening program, it will require MDH to conduct an assessment on current outreach, education, and health disparities in cancer screening, including the availability of biomarker testing in the State. In conducting this assessment, MDH will be required to establish a stakeholder workgroup to advise on the state of current cancer screening and make recommendations on an outreach plan to educate communities negatively impacted by health disparities in cancer screening and cancer care. MDH recognizes the importance of evaluating existing programs, as well as including stakeholders with lived experiences in development of future outreach plans, and supports these amendments. MDH supports SB 965 with the amendments adopted for HB 815.

If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Megan Peters, Acting Director of Governmental Affairs at megan.peters@maryland.gov or (410) 260-3190.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "LH Scott".

Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H.
Secretary