

Dr. Stacey Keen
HB 1259 Written Testimony for Senate
3/27/2024

To the Senate Finance Committee and Chair Senator Pamela Beidle:

My name is Dr. Stacey Keen. I'm immediate past president of the Maryland Radiological Society, a diagnostic radiologist with Advanced Radiology specializing in breast imaging, and a breast cancer survivor.

I'm writing in support of House Bill 1259, "Health Insurance - Breast and Lung Cancer Screening - Coverage Requirements."

Screening saves lives. There has been a more than 40% reduction in mortality from breast cancer in the United States since the initiation of widespread screening mammography in the late 1980's. In order to save lives and decrease medical expenses, we must find breast cancer early at its most curable stages and be able to act on these findings.

My job as a breast imaging specialist includes looking for findings on screening mammograms suspicious for breast cancer and to pursue these findings with further evaluation as needed by additional mammographic views, ultrasound, and/or MRI, as well as biopsy to confirm the diagnosis of cancer.

Unfortunately, I have personally seen multiple patients decline or cancel the recommended studies because of the inability to pay for them. Some who eventually returned were diagnosed with cancer at a more advanced stage than would have been the case initially. More advanced cancers can lead to lower survival rates and greater more aggressive treatments at higher costs.

In addition to being a breast imaging specialist, I'm a breast cancer survivor. My own cancer was found on a screening mammogram. I was able to promptly undergo the necessary additional mammographic views and ultrasound that led to my biopsy and diagnosis. Had those additional studies been delayed and my cancer not been detected at such an early stage, I might not be here today over 20 years later.

I know the anxiety of being diagnosed with breast cancer. The addition of financial concerns at the already highly stressful diagnostic time places an even greater burden both emotionally and financially upon patients and their families.

I urge you to support HB 1259. Thank you for your consideration of this significant bill.

Respectfully,
Stacey Keen, MD, FACR