



Leading Radiology Forward
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TO: The Honorable Pamela Beidle, Chair
The Honorable Katherine Klausmeier, Vice Chair
Members, Finance Committee

FROM: Steve Forthuber, President Eastern Operations

DATE: March 26, 2024

RE: **SUPPORT:** House Bill (HB) 1259 – *Health Insurance – Breast and Lung Cancer Screening – Coverage Requirements*

RadNet leads the nation in outpatient diagnostic imaging services with nearly 400 centers in eight states. RadNet has a major presence in Maryland and our Eastern Operations are headquartered in Baltimore. You may know us locally as Advanced Radiology, Community Radiology Associates, and American Radiology Associates with over 60 imaging centers throughout the state. RadNet is the largest provider of screening mammography and low-dose CT screenings for lung cancer in Maryland.

HB 1259 would help save the lives of Marylanders through the elimination of barriers to timely breast and lung cancer diagnoses caused by out-of-pocket costs and prior-authorization. Specifically, the bill would amend the current definition of “supplemental breast examination” to include image-guided breast biopsy for the purposes of insurers, health service plans, and health maintenance organization to provide coverage without patient cost-shares. Additionally, the bill would prohibit certain insurers, health service plans, and health maintenance organizations from requiring prior-authorization for lung cancer screening or supplemental diagnostic lung cancer imaging.

An estimated 3,000 Marylanders die from lung and breast cancer each year and lung cancer is the deadliest cancer in Maryland. Breast and lung cancers affect the African-American community disproportionately. Early detection and diagnosis save lives. Yet, cancer screening rates are lower among racial and ethnic minorities. Image-guided breast biopsy confirms the presence or absence of malignant tissue and is used to guide treatment if necessary. Patient out-of-pocket costs for image-guided breast biopsy can run in the thousands of dollars depending on site-of-service making cost a barrier to access and timely diagnosis. Most patients are unaware that they have lung cancer until symptoms present which are signs of late-stage disease. Maryland ranks 36th in the nation with respect to lung cancer screening with a rate of only 2.9 percent.¹ There’s no reason to tolerate such low screening rates for lung cancer. Prior-authorization requirements delay patient care.

No Marylander should be left behind in the fight against breast and lung cancer. As community-based providers on the front-line of cancer, our mission is to ensure that everyone in Maryland has ready, equitable, and affordable access to state-of-the-art imaging that will detect and diagnose breast and lung cancer at their earliest stage.

RadNet appreciates the opportunity to provide this statement before Finance Committee.

¹ <https://www.lung.org/research/state-of-lung-cancer/states/maryland>