



TO: The Honorable Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk, Chair  
The Honorable Bonnie Cullison, Vice Chair  
Members, Health and Government Operations Committee

DATE: March 5, 2024

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

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LUNGeVity Foundation is the nation’s preeminent lung cancer nonprofit that funds research, provides education and support, and builds communities for the more than 230,000 Americans diagnosed with lung cancer each year and over 600,000 Americans living with the disease. LUNGeVity has offices in Bethesda and Chicago and advocates for policies that will improve access to lung cancer care at both the federal and state levels.

LUNGeVity strongly supports HB 1259 because it would remove barriers to life-saving lung cancer screening and follow-up diagnostics. Specifically, it would prohibit certain insurers, health service plans, and health maintenance organizations from requiring prior authorization for lung cancer screening or follow-up diagnostic imaging. It would also require that these payers cover lung cancer screening with no out-of-pocket costs for eligible patients.

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death both in Maryland and the United States. Screening with a low-dose CT scan can help identify lung cancer in earlier stages when it is easier to treat and the cure rate is significantly higher than that for late-stage disease. However, currently less than 6% of those eligible for lung cancer screening in the U.S. receive it, and Maryland ranks 36<sup>th</sup> in the nation with a screening rate of only 2.9 percent.<sup>1</sup> Out-of-pocket costs and prior authorization requirements create unnecessary barriers to care and disincentivize patients from accessing potentially life-saving screening and diagnostics.

HB 1259 would be a significant step forward in improving patient access and advancing lung cancer care in Maryland. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this statement before the Health and Government Operations Committee.

Sincerely,

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