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In support of Senate Bill 518: Health Insurance- Ovarian Cancer Prevention With Salpingectomy-Required Coverage and Prohibited Cost Sharing

Dear members of the Maryland Senate Finance Committee:

My name is Dr. Lisa Mullen. I am a breast imaging radiologist at Johns Hopkins Medicine and current President of the Maryland Radiological Society. I am writing in support of Senate Bill 518.

The American Cancer Society estimates that in 2025, about 20,890 women will receive a diagnosis of ovarian cancer, and about 12,730 women will die from ovarian cancer. A woman's risk of getting ovarian cancer in her lifetime is 1 in 91. All women are at risk for this cancer, although some women with gene mutations and/or family history are at higher risk.

It turns out that most of the deadliest "ovarian" cancers do not start in the ovary. Rather, they begin in the fallopian tubes. The cancer cells shed from the end of the fallopian tube to spread all over the inside of the abdomen and pelvis. Most of these cancers present at an advanced stage and are not curable, despite aggressive treatment. The 5-year survival is only 55%.

In breast cancer screening, we say that "early detection saves lives". Annual screening mammography has been shown to substantially decrease mortality from breast cancer. Unfortunately, with fallopian tube cancer, there is no effective test for screening. Medical imaging tests (ultrasound, CT scans and MRI) are not effective for finding early disease and do not improve survival from the disease. Screening tests are not recommended.

The intervention with the most promise to decrease incidence and mortality from fallopian tube cancer is surgical removal of the fallopian tubes (salpingectomy). This surgery can be performed as a stand-alone procedure or can be accomplished during abdominal or pelvic surgeries performed for other reasons. Removal of the fallopian tubes could save the lives of many women. We need support for educational campaigns for women and their providers as well as insurance coverage for this life-saving procedure.

We urge you to support Senate Bill 518, which would provide insurance coverage and prohibit cost-sharing for salpingectomy.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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