

March 4, 2025

Lifebridge Health, Sinai Hospital
2410 W. Belvedere Ave
Baltimore, MD 21210

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing in regards to bill HB1187, advocating for insurance coverage of cold cap therapy for patients undergoing chemotherapy.

I am a medical oncologist at Sinai Hospital, where I treat exclusively breast cancer patients. So very many women are devastated by a breast cancer diagnosis, and it adds insult to injury when they learn that most IV chemotherapy drugs cause hair loss, sometimes permanently with particular drugs like Taxotere which cause permanent crown balding.

With a bald head, it is impossible for these women to forget even for a minute that they are cancer patients fighting for their lives. Every time they catch their reflection in a mirror or a window the harsh reality hits home that they are a patient. Yes, they can wear wigs or scarves, but wigs can be uncomfortable, and wearing a scarf on an obviously bald head is like announcing to the world that one is a cancer patient, evoking curiosity, pity and sympathy, all of which may be unwanted.

I have had a lot of experience with cold caps, and the patients who have used them successfully are always more at ease, better adapted to their cancer diagnosis, and come in sunnier and happier than those who have not. I am often asked about cold caps by patients, and am so disappointed when I have to say that we have them available, but they can be expensive and "are not always covered by insurance".

Please think of what you would want were you in the shoes of a young woman, or ANY woman, facing chemotherapy, and what might make it even a little more bearable.

Please pass this bill.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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