

Public Health Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-249
AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BREAST
Title: HEALTH AND BREAST CANCER AWARENESS WORKING GROUP.
Vote Date: 3/11/2022
Vote Action: Joint Favorable
PH Date: 3/9/2022
File No.: 96

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

The Public Health Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

The bill makes changes to the Department of Public Health's (DPH) breast and cervical cancer early detection programs to promote screenings, detection, and treatment among unserved or underserved populations. The bill adds HPV testing and tomosynthesis to the educational and outreach components of the programs. The focus on unserved and underserved populations is driven by higher rates of breast and cervical cancer among these populations.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Manisha Juthani, MD, Commissioner, CT Department of Public Health (DPH):

DPH supports this bill which implements the recommendations of the Breast Health and Breast Cancer Working Group. DPH already supports the provision of service to higher risk populations and will continue our efforts to enhance this support and the provision of services outlined in this bill.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Thomas Farquhar, MD, Legislative Co-Chair, Radiological Society of CT:

The bill recommends enhancements to the Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection and Treatment Referral Program that gives priority to minority communities, encourages the use

of breast tomosynthesis, and encourages the use of both PAP and HPV testing. The Society is in support of the bill.

Bryte Johnson, American Cancer Society, Cancer Action Network:

Despite the challenges we continue to face during the COVID-19 pandemic, cancer screening remains a public health priority, and we must provide the public with safe opportunities to prevent cancer or detect it early to improve patient outcomes. Screening disparities are already evident and, without deliberate focus, are likely to increase as a result of the pandemic. Efforts to promote screening and overcome barriers for populations with low access to screening options must be at the forefront of our focus.

Jan Kritzman:

I am a 9 1/2-year breast cancer survivor. There is no prevention of breast cancer, no vaccine, no warp speed. The only tool in the toolbox to provide long-term survival is education, complete and thorough testing, and early detection. In minority communities, breast cancer often strikes women at a younger age than Caucasian women and is often detected at a late stage. The most important addition I suggest is that breast cancer awareness and breast self-exam be taught in the CT public school system from grades 6 to 12

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

There was no testimony in opposition.

Reported by: David Rackliffe, Assistant Clerk

Date: March 17, 2022