



May 03, 2023

The Honorable Elaine Marzola
Chair, Assembly Commerce and Labor Committee
Nevada Legislature, Room 4100
401 S. Carson Street
Carson City, NV 89701

RE: SB 330 Breast Cancer Screening and Diagnostic Imaging – SUPPORT

Dear Chair Marzola and Members of the Committee:

The Nevada Cancer Coalition, Susan G. Komen, and American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, along with the undersigned organizations strongly support SB 330 which would eliminate out-of-pocket costs for medically necessary screening and diagnostic breast imaging. Individuals facing high out-of-pocket costs associated with screening and diagnostic imaging are less likely to have their recommended follow-up imaging. This can mean the person will delay diagnosis and care until the cancer has spread to other parts of the body, making it much deadlier and more costly to treat. According to a report from the National Cancer Institute, breast cancer necessitates the highest patient out-of-pocket costs of all cancers. The State of Nevada must make every effort to reduce the costs of diagnosis and treatment, as breast cancer is a leading cause of death among women in Nevada and across the United States.

Thanks to the Affordable Care Act (ACA), widespread access to preventive screening mammography is available to millions of people at no cost. However, an estimated 16% of screening mammograms require a follow-up diagnostic exam to completely rule out breast cancer or confirm the need for a biopsy if an abnormality is detected. Diagnostic imaging is also often recommended as the primary breast imaging for breast cancer survivors, women at high risk for breast cancer, and those who have undergone a lumpectomy followed by radiation therapy. Unfortunately, these patients often face exorbitant costs ranging from hundreds to thousands of dollars for follow-up diagnostic imaging. Patients who incur high expenses prior to even starting treatment run a much higher risk of financial hardship and often put off needed care.

Further, breast cancer does not affect all racial and ethnic groups equally. While white women are more likely to be diagnosed with breast cancer, Black women are more likely to die of breast cancer than any other group. And in Nevada, Black women are dying of breast cancer at a disproportionately higher rate (32.4 vs. 20.6 per 100,000). This is a health disparity that cannot be ignored.

While cancer is not wholly preventable it is much easier to treat and the chance of dying from it is greatly reduced when it is detected early. Additionally, early detection greatly reduces the expenses incurred by individuals, families, and our health system. Advances in medical and scientific research

have led to evidence-based strategies, including new imaging technologies, to identify each person's unique risk of breast cancer and to detect cancer early.

As committed partners in the fight against breast cancer, we know how deeply important it is for all cancer patients to have fair and equitable access to breast imaging that may save their lives. By eliminating financial pressures and allowing all people to receive screening and diagnostic imaging at no cost, we can reduce the number of deaths and reduce costs to Nevada's healthcare system. Nevada Medicaid covers all breast cancer screening and all diagnostic testing options with no out-of-pocket costs. This bill would provide parity for individuals with state regulated insurance.

To date, Arkansas, Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Montana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, New York, Vermont have already passed this legislation, and Maryland, Tennessee, and Washington are awaiting governor signatures. Twelve additional states, including Nevada, are running similar bills as we speak.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge your support of SB 330. Thank you for your continued leadership and for your attention to this important issue.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this bill further, please contact me at (775) 737-9720 or via email at cari@nevadacancercoalition.org.

Sincerely,

Cari Herington, MBA
Executive Director
Nevada Cancer Coalition

Supporting Organizations:

Cancer Care Specialists
Carson Tahoe Health
Comprehensive Cancer Centers of Nevada
High Sierra Area Health Education Center (AHEC)
NAACP Reno-Sparks Branch #112
Nevada Business Group on Health/Nevada Health Partners
Nevada Chronic Care Collaborative
Nevada Primary Care Association
Nevada Public Health Association
Northern Nevada Health System
Personalized Imaging Consultants
Reno Diagnostic Centers
Renown Cancer Institute
Sunrise Hospital