

May 12, 2023

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
United States Senate
709 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
United States Senate
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Joseph Morelle
United States House of Representatives
1317 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Brian Fitzpatrick
United States House of Representatives
271 Cannon House Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators Baldwin and Collins and Representatives Morelle and Fitzpatrick,

The undersigned organizations, which represent patients and providers across the country, would like to thank you for introducing the Screening for Communities to Receive Early and Equitable Needed Services (SCREENS) for Cancer Act. We pledge our support for this bicameral and bipartisan legislation, which will reauthorize the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (NBCCEDP).

The NBCCEDP provides lifesaving breast and cervical cancer screening and diagnostic services to low-income, uninsured, or underinsured people in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, two U.S. territories, five U.S.-affiliated Pacific Islands and 13 tribes or tribal organizations. Since its founding in 1991, NBCCEDP has served more than 6.1 million people detecting nearly 77,000 invasive breast cancers, over 24,000 premalignant breast lesions, more than 5,000 cervical cancers, and over 239,000 premalignant cervical lesions. The program, which is a partnership between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state health departments, provides public education, outreach, patient navigation and care coordination to increase breast and cervical cancer screening rates and reach underserved, vulnerable populations. NBCCEDP funding also supports interventions which help address inequities in breast and cervical cancer screening and diagnosis, placing special emphasis on reaching people who are geographically or culturally isolated and/or from racial or ethnic minorities. The program focuses on factors at the interpersonal, organizational, community and policy levels that influence screening.

The program remains as crucial as ever. Last reauthorized in 2007, NBCCEDP has a legacy of reaching underserved populations and providing high-quality care, giving people across the country access to needed breast and cervical health services. Data shows that the COVID-19 pandemic caused people to delay or forego life-saving cancer screenings, which will lead to more advanced cancers and increase related mortality. For breast and cervical cancer, studies show that screening prevalence decreased by six percent and 11 percent, respectively, between 2018 and 2020. Research suggests that those postponed breast screenings appeared to disproportionately affect women of color: Non-Hispanic white women had 17 percent fewer breast cancer diagnoses, while the year-over-year decline was 53 percent for Asian women, 43 percent for Hispanic women and 27 percent for Black women. More recent studies confirm that the decline in screening rates persisted throughout the pandemic and rates have not returned to normal levels. Your legislation will help counteract these alarming trends.

The SCREENS for Cancer Act preserves access to vital public health infrastructure that has a proven track record of improving cancer screening rates in vulnerable populations. This legislation would provide greater flexibility to NBCCEDP grantees, allowing for a greater emphasis on implementing innovative evidence-based interventions and aggressive outreach to underserved communities through media,

peer educators and patient navigators. Reauthorizing the NBCCEDP will enable cancer screening in underserved communities, leading to more people being screened, more cancers being diagnosed at earlier stages and ultimately better outcomes for people at lower costs for our health care system.

We look forward to working with you on this important legislation. If you need anything or have questions, please reach out to Valerie Nauman, Susan G. Komen's Manager of Federal Policy & Advocacy, at vnauman@komen.org. Thank you again for your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American Sexual Health Association
Brem Foundation to Defeat Breast Cancer
Check for a Lump
FORCE: Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered
Living Beyond Breast Cancer
Men Supporting Women With Cancer
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health
National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship
National Comprehensive Cancer Network
National Women's Health Network
Prevent Cancer Foundation
Sharsheret
Society of Breast Imaging
Susan G. Komen
The National Consortium of Breast Centers
Tigerlily Foundation
Young Survival Coalition