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Insurance and Real Estate Committee
Public Hearing Testimony- February 3, 2009

**SB 290 AN ACT REQUIRING HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR BONE
MARROW TESTING**

**HB 5024 AN ACT CONCERNING HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR BONE
MARROW TESTING**

Good Afternoon Chairman Crisco, Chairman Fontana and members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee. My name is Betty Berger and I would like to take this opportunity to urge support for **SB 290** and **HB 5024**, which both deal with insurance coverage for bone marrow testing.

I have been a volunteer with the American Cancer Society for close to twelve years. I became a volunteer because of my experiences as a caregiver to someone that beat the disease. The reason that he was able to beat the disease was because of a bone marrow transplant.

At age 16 my son was diagnosed with non-hodgkin lymphoma. He underwent many treatments, but it was not until he received a successful bone marrow transplant that he was able to make positive improvements. Thanks to a donor, my son is still here with us today.

These are two important bills because it encourages more people to consider donating bone marrow. While my son was lucky, I know that there are many more out there that are not. As a volunteer and advocate I have shared my story with other caregivers, members of Congress as well as many of you. I have heard the stories of loved ones that were not so lucky, or are still waiting for a miracle. These individuals have a difficult road ahead because of the obstacles that people face when they wish to donate, amongst the greatest is the cost for bone marrow testing.

With more people donating successful matches will become easier and another life may be saved. We are all facing financial burdens during this time, the cost for bone marrow testing can exceed a comfortable out-of-pocket expense. Through these two pieces of legislation someone can give back without having to worry about placing themselves in a difficult financial situation.

I encourage you to please support these two proposals so that more people, like my son, can be a terrible disease. Thank you