



**Appropriations Committee**  
**March 2, 2011**  
**American Cancer Society Testimony**

**H.B. No. 6380 An Act Concerning The Budget For The Biennium Ending June 30, 2013**

The American Cancer Society is in opposition to the significant cut made to the Connecticut Breast and Cervical Early Detection Program (CBCCEDP) in the Governor's 2012-2013 Biennium budget.

During these challenging economic conditions it is understandable that difficult choices will have to be made. These are decisions that need to be made with careful and deliberate consideration, and we recognize the efforts of the legislature in achieving that end. As careful as these decisions need to be, there needs to be deliberation regarding the long-term effects that specific funding cuts may have. In 2011 it is estimated that approximately 20,000 Connecticut residents will hear the most horrible phrase, "you have cancer." If there are cuts made to the CT. Breast and Cervical Early Detection Program, the state will witness long-term health effects and significantly more dollars lost, not saved.

The state Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program is a comprehensive screening program available throughout Connecticut for medically underserved women. The primary objective of the program is to significantly increase the number of women who receive breast and cervical cancer screening and diagnostic services. These services cover routine screenings and exams in an effort to detect cancers at its earliest stages when the chances for survival are the greatest.

These cancers have alarming incidence and death rates for Connecticut residents. Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among women in Connecticut; furthermore the state has the 12th highest breast cancer death rate in the nation. The survival rate for cervical cancer would be over 90% if all women over the age of 18 who are sexually active had a Pap test on a regular basis. While we have the prevention screenings available, without appropriate funding for this program, the screenings will not reach significant numbers of eligible residents.

According to the Dept of Public Health, CBCCEDP Funding for 2010-2011 supported 10,500 women, a mere 3% of the target population ages for 19-54 to receive early detection and prevention services. In 2009-2010, the CBCCEDP screened 9,628 women for breast and cervical cancer; 57 were diagnosed with breast cancer, 25 were diagnosed with cervical cancer, and 149 were diagnosed with precancerous cervical changes.

A reduction of \$243,106 in screening dollars would lead to a 10% reduction in breast and cervical cancer screening, or 1,050 women. Extrapolating, this could result in 5-6 undiagnosed breast cancers, 2-3 undiagnosed cervical cancers and 15 undiagnosed precancerous cervical changes. It is estimated that about one third of costs for fatal breast

cancer were avoided through mammography screening, accounting for 72-81% of estimated total treatment cost savings achieved by screening. Savings in treatment costs offset about 31-35% of screening costs for 1987 to 1993.

As the numbers show, past funding has been inadequate with many eligible women unable to take advantage of the program as a result. Any attempts to further cut funding will more negatively impact the effectiveness of the program. Women are already being turned away from receiving screenings, and treatment sites throughout the state are no longer accepting patients. If we were able to fully fund preventative cancer screenings we could drastically reduce the number of cancer incidence and mortality rates. Cutting funds from this program reduces access to care in a time when we need to be looking for ways to increase access.

As these budget negotiations continue, the American Cancer Society stands ready and willing to work with members of the Appropriations Committee and other members of the Legislature to effectively establish a coherent budget which adequately addresses this and other health care related concerns. Cutting these funds now can only escalate the current economic downturn and result in a greater number of life's being affected by cancer.

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