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Feb. 14, 2012

Senator Joseph Crisco and Representative Robert Megna, Co-Chairs
Insurance and Real Estate Committee
Legislative Office Building – Room 2800
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: RSB 12 Health Insurance Coverage for Breast Magnetic Resonance Imaging

Dear Senator Crisco, Representative Megna and Members of the Insurance & Real Estate Committee:

My name is Nancy M. Cappello and I am President and Founder of Are You Dense, Inc. and Are You Dense Advocacy, Inc. These nonprofit organizations were birthed after my advanced stage breast cancer diagnosis in 2004 in spite of a decade of 'normal' mammograms. Shocked that my cancer was detected at such a late stage, I learned for the first time that my dense breast tissue prevented my mammogram from 'seeing' my quarter-size cancer. Searching for information about 'dense breast tissue' led me to medical journals which informed me that 40% of women have dense breast tissue, mammograms are limited in detecting cancer in women with dense breast tissue and women with dense breast tissue have a 4 to 6 times greater risk of breast cancer than women with fatty breast tissue.

Armed with this knowledge and outraged that most women were unaware of their dense breast tissue status; I began working with Senators Hartley and Crisco in 2005 to change this fatal flaw in the Early Detection of Breast Cancer. Since that time, with your leadership and support, the Connecticut Legislature has led the nation in the Mission to ensure that women with dense breast tissue have equal access to an Early Breast Cancer diagnosis by providing insurance coverage for additional screening tools to mammography and informing women of their breast density through their mammography report.

RSB 12 will clarify the criteria for coverage of MRIs for women with dense breast tissue and other risk factors. It will give physicians and their patients access to a reliable screening tool for the Early Detection of Breast Cancer. Finding cancer at its earliest stage is the best defense against dying prematurely from this disease.

Your leadership has led to legislation in the state of Texas in 2011 and, in 2012; thirteen states are introducing breast density bills. Additionally, the Breast Density and Mammography Reporting Act of 2011 (HR 3102) was introduced by Congresswoman DeLauro in October, 2011.

Sincerely,

Nancy M Cappello

Nancy M. Cappello, Ph.D.
President and Founder
Are You Dense, Inc.

Are You Dense, Inc.
96 Rowley Road
Woodbury CT 06798
501 (c)(3) Public Charity
www.AreYouDense.org