

Are You DENSE?
ADVOCACY
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March 6, 2014

Senator Crisco & Representative Megna
Insurance and Real Estate Committee
Room 2800, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Senate Bill 190 - AN ACT REQUIRING HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR TOMOSYNTHESIS FOR BREAST CANCER SCREENINGS.

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

My name is Nancy Cappello and I reside in Woodbury CT. I am here today to speak in support of Senate Bill 190 - AN ACT REQUIRING HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR TOMOSYNTHESIS FOR BREAST CANCER SCREENINGS.

I am Director of two non-profit organizations - Are You Dense Inc. and Are You Dense Advocacy Inc. I founded these organizations after my advanced-stage diagnosis within weeks of a 'normal' mammogram. Shocked and confused as to why my mammogram failed to detect my cancer at an early stage, I was informed that my extremely dense breast tissue hid my cancer. My quest to uncover how this "dense tissue" harmed me, catapulted me to scour the medical journals. What I discovered drove me to our mission to educate the public about the risks and screening challenges of dense breast tissue to ensure that all women have access to an early cancer diagnosis.

Working with the legislature and members of this committee, Connecticut enacted 3 landmark laws – insurance coverage for ultrasound and MRI screening for women with dense breast tissue and the first bill in the nation to require density reporting through the mammography report. These ground-breaking laws have made Connecticut known as the beacon of Early Detection across the globe.

Tomosynthesis or 3D mammography is an emerging imaging technology that was approved by the FDA in 2011 as an adjunct to 2D digital mammography, conferring additional radiation. In 2013, the FDA approved software that allows 2D synthetic views to be reconstructed from 3D, reducing the increased radiation and greater scanning time associated with tomosynthesis. This approval by the FDA, will likely fuel further adoption of this technology.

Are You Dense Advocacy, Inc.

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AreYouDenseAdvocacy.org



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Nancy M Cappello, Ph.D.
Testimony in support of Senate Bill 190
March 6, 2014

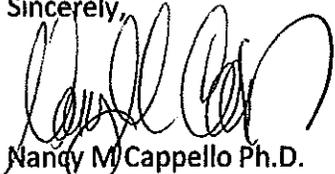
Research has demonstrated that tomosynthesis reduces recall rates and improves invasive cancer detection rates which benefit the screening population. Reducing call-backs decrease costs and increased detection improve treatment options and survival outcomes.

While there is an increase in the detection of invasive cancer by tomosynthesis in overall breast tissue composition, there is no evidence that tomosynthesis will replace adjunct screening for women with dense breast tissue. Tomosynthesis is an x-ray and xray is inherently limited in dense breasts. With tomosynthesis, invisible cancers still exist.

Yale radiologist and researcher, Dr. Regina Hooley presented her findings of 'normal' tomosynthesis results and adjunct whole breast ultrasound screening. The supplemental cancer detection rate resulted in .5 to 2.7 cancers per 1000 concluding that screening ultrasound can detect invisible cancers on tomosynthesis.

In closing, tomosynthesis has shown a direct benefit to improving overall invasive cancer detection rates and diminishing call-backs. It will continue to be researched as more facilities in Connecticut and across the country begin adding this tool to its screening portfolio. However, for women with dense breast tissue, the adjunct screening may still be necessary.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nancy M Cappello', written over a faint, illegible background.

Nancy M Cappello Ph.D.
Founder & Director
Are You Dense Advocacy Inc.