

My name is Kelsey Phillips. I am writing to support the current funding to the state's Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program and in opposition to the elimination of the \$12 million transfer to the Tobacco and Health Trust Fund (THTF), the primary source of tobacco control funding. Cancer has deeply affected my life and I am thanking you for supporting policies to reduce cancer in the state so that others don't have to go through what I have.

At the young age of 16, I lost my mother to breast cancer. My mom was my best friend, and one of the toughest people I have ever met. She went through every chemotherapy treatment with a smile, and made sure dinner was on the table every night, no matter how sick she felt. She never once took time to feel bad for herself; instead putting whatever energy she had into taking care of my brother and I. At the time, I thought watching her hair fall out and her skin turn grey was the worst thing I'd have to see. I hated witnessing my mom cry when she thought no one was looking. I hated knowing how much she was suffering. Eventually the cancer spread to her brain, and watching her hair fall out and skin turn grey seemed like nothing compared to watching her turn into a person who I didn't know. Slowly the cancer took over her body, and my mom went from the brightest person I knew, to not even knowing where she was. That was the defining moment of my life. I had to watch my mother die. There wasn't anything I could do to help. I was able to say goodbye to my mother on September 19th, 2004. I held her hand and told her it was okay to let go. I told her how hard she fought, and how proud I was that she was so tough, but it was time for her to let go.

Everyday I think about people all over the world who have to go through what I did, and my heart breaks knowing their pain and suffering. I think about my future. What if I have children, and they have to go through what I did? I recently learned I am BRCA positive, making my risk of breast cancer skyrocket to 87%. I'm also 5 months pregnant. I'm lucky enough to have the resources to do prophylactic surgeries, or advanced screenings to ensure that I don't go through what my mother did. I am so thankful for the care I have received and the amazing doctors who have helped guide me through this process.

Thank you for not cutting the budget to the Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program. This program protects those most vulnerable in the state. The women that would lose access if this program were to be cut, will now have somewhere to turn to get the screening they need. Thank you for giving these women the chance at life they deserve.