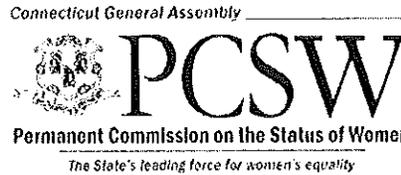


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**Testimony of
The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women
Submitted to the
Insurance and Real Estate Committee
March 3, 2016**

Re: H.B. 5233: An Act Requiring Health Insurance Coverage for Tomosynthesis for Breast Cancer Screenings

Senators Crisco and Kelly, Representatives Megna and Sampson, and distinguished members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) on H.B. 5233, An Act Requiring Health Insurance Coverage for Tomosynthesis for Breast Cancer Screenings.

Currently, about 1 in 8 women in the United States will develop invasive breast cancer over her lifetime.ⁱ Breast cancer is the most common form of cancer in American women of any race or ethnicity. Among Hispanic women, breast cancer is the most common cause of death by cancer; among all other races and ethnicities, breast cancer is the second most common cause of death by cancer.ⁱⁱ Regular screenings for breast cancer increases the likelihood of early detection, when treatment is easier.ⁱⁱⁱ

Digital tomosynthesis creates a 3-dimensional image of the breast using x-rays. This is accomplished through an x-ray tube moving in an arc around the breast, taking multiple photos that are then reconstructed into one image with computer software. This process differs from traditional methods of mammography, when x-ray images are taken of the breast while it is compressed between two glass plates. This compression of the breast creates the possibility of cancer being hidden by overlapping tissue.^{iv} Tomosynthesis helps to eliminate this possibility by taking multiple x-ray photographs of the breast and creating a more comprehensive product for evaluation.

A 2014 report comparing the utilization of tomosynthesis in combination with traditional mammography versus solely traditional mammography showed a decrease in false positives and an increase in the detection of early cancers when both screenings were used together.^v PCSW urges you to support this legislation, which will make this potentially life-saving cancer screening more accessible to women in Connecticut.

ⁱ BreastCancer.org, U.S. Breast Cancer Statistics <http://www.breastcancer.org/symptoms/understand_bc/statistics>

ⁱⁱ U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Breast Cancer Statistics <<http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/breast/statistics/>>

ⁱⁱⁱ U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, What Can I Do to Reduce My Risk for Breast Cancer? <http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/breast/basic_info/prevention.htm>

^{iv} BreastCancer.org, Digital Tomosynthesis <http://www.breastcancer.org/symptoms/testing/types/dig_tomosynth>

^v Friedewald, S.M. et als. (2014), Breast Cancer Screening Using Tomosynthesis in Combination with Digital Mammography. Journal of the American Medical Association.