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To the honorable members of the House Insurance Committee;

On behalf of Susan G. Komen, the thousands of Ohio patients affected by breast cancer that we serve, and their families, we write in support of H.B. 390.

In our efforts to reduce breast cancer mortality by half in a decade, our priorities are to ensure access to affordable, high-quality care for all patients, and increase coverage and access to breast cancer screening and diagnostic services. H.B. 390 would do this in Ohio. We have seen how the patient protections of the Affordable Care Act have greatly expanded access and utilization of preventive services, which evidence shows will continue to detect breast cancer earlier, in more treatable, less invasive and less expensive stages of diagnosis. This broad access to screening also reduces the disparities we see in underserved populations, like the African American population where mortality is 41% higher than in white women. We have seen the need for our programs to dedicate valuable resources to covering preventive screenings reduced, allowing us to shift our focus to downstream health care improvement, patient education, and quality of care work that will more rapidly reduce mortality.

This is all possible because of essential health benefits ensuring preventive care must be a part of all insurance plans. We have been able to educate patients about this coverage right, and empower them to learn about their risk and utilize screening benefits without cost sharing. H.B. 390 would make sure the healthcare services we use every day, like mammography, clinical breast exams and primary care visits informing patients of their risk, are guaranteed coverage.

At Komen, we also know firsthand how critical it is to provide stable access to high-quality care, and that financial toxicity should not be yet another side-effect patients need to consider in their treatment or survivorship. The story of our dear friend, and fellow patient advocate, Tori Geib, sheds light on the financial toxicity of cancer and how those who carry a diagnosis of breast cancer with them need these patient protections guaranteed. Tori was diagnosed at 30 years old with Stage 4, Metastatic Breast Cancer, was unable to work due to cancer in her bones and spine and forced onto long term disability, which in turn canceled her benefits package, including her health insurance. She faced the financial toxicity of cancer throughout treatment, after a year with no insurance and eventually had to file bankruptcy due to the crippling medical debt. Without the Affordable Care Act's protections for patients with pre-existing conditions, after losing her insurance, she may never have been able to get it again. We cannot take these assurances for granted, and must take steps to ensure, through H.B. 390, that we codify them in Ohio law.

MORE THAN PINK™

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Reduce the current number
of breast cancer deaths by

50%

in the U.S. within the next decade.



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Tori has shared that H.B. 390 brings her a sense of hope and relief that battles with her insurance may not constantly loom over her head. If passed, she could focus on her treatment and the many therapies emerging, without having to worry that her cancer could bar her from coverage in the future, or worry that an annual or lifetime limit would make a new drug that can keep her alive but is unobtainable. All the science and breakthroughs mean nothing if people like me can't access it.

Sincerely,
Julie McMahon
Director of Mission
Susan G. Komen Columbus