



Chairwoman Manchester, Vice Chairman Cutrona, Ranking Member Liston and Members of the Committee:

It is my honor and privilege to be allowed to give proponent testimony for H.B. 371 as this is a bill that will help save the lives of women whose breast cancer may otherwise go undetected. My hope is that Ohio passes this bill and that similar bills in other states may follow.

I am a former athlete who became morbidly obese, lost over 200 pounds and fought to achieve the highest fitness level of my life before being diagnosed with breast cancer. I am a three-year breast cancer survivor and owe that to early detection by a 3D mammogram given in a mobile mammogram unit.

Even though I had no family history of breast cancer, I did get mammograms as recommended. After the previous mammogram, I recalled getting a letter stating that my mammogram was normal, but due to dense breast tissue, it recommended a 3D mammogram the next time I was due for a screening. That letter was largely forgotten until I went for my next screening.

Thankfully, upon checking in at the mobile unit, the technician asked if I had ever been told I had dense breast tissue. This reminded me of the letter I had received the previous year. What surprised me most was the next question: "Do you want to get the 3D mammogram? It may not be covered by your insurance and you will need to cover the additional expense out of pocket." Fortunately, I am financially able to cover such expenses and agreed to get the 3D mammogram.

That decision was a literal lifesaver or at the very least gave me a better chance of winning the fight. When I went for the follow-up CT Scan and subsequent biopsy, the radiologist told me that I was lucky I chose to get the 3D mammogram. She was 99% positive my tumor would not have been detected. So ultimately, early detection occurred because of my ability to incur an additional expense.

Early breast cancer detection should never be a financial decision. We all have to make choices each and every day and whether to get a potentially lifesaving procedure shouldn't be one of them. A 3D mammogram should be something that every woman has equal access and at the same cost. It saved my life and could do the same for countless others.

Thank you for your consideration and your time.

Kim Emery