

Dear Representative Schmidt,

I am writing to speak out for women to have better access to breast cancer screening.

I am a 56 year old health blogger and very fit woman. I have dense breasts and never knew that different types of mammography work best in those situations.

In June of 2020 I went in for my postponed mammogram. Said mammogram was originally to take place in March of 2020 but Covid impeded that. They identified a 6 cm mass (the size of a small lime) in my left breast.

My breast cancer is called lobular cancer, and I am also triple negative. Lobular cancer is often not detected on mammograms, hence they call it the 'sneaky' cancer. Having dense breasts also makes mammograms less clear. All of these variables came together to create a perfect storm of medical complications.

I started 5 months of chemotherapy, a modified radical mastectomy with 11 lymph nodes removed (of which there was cancer in three), 5 weeks of radiation, 6 months of oral chemo and I will be on the newly approved immunotherapy called Keytruda for a year.

There are many women who don't have easy access to breast health opportunities or have no insurance. Without intervention at the early stages, their prognosis can be more dire. ALL women have a basic right and access to breast care, regardless of their socioeconomic status. Please work hard to pass House Bill 371 and TOGETHER we can beat this hideous disease.

-Paula Maier