

June 1, 2015

The Honorable Roy Blunt
260 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Sherrod Brown
713 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Leonard Lance
2353 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Kathy Castor
205 Cannon House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

RE: H.R.2540/ S.1192 – Breast Cancer Patient Education Act of 2015

The undersigned organizations thank you for introducing H.R.2540/S.1192, the *Breast Cancer Patient Education Act of 2015*, which will increase awareness among patients about the availability of breast reconstruction and prostheses provided under the Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-277). This educational effort will inform patients about the availability of breast reconstruction at the time of breast cancer surgery or the option to postpone breast reconstruction until other aspects of their cancer care are completed. It will also provide patients with information about non-surgical options, including the availability of prostheses or breast forms.

In 2015, an estimated 231,840 new cases of invasive breast cancer are expected to be diagnosed among women in the United States, according to the American Cancer Society. African American women under the age of 40 have much higher incidences of breast cancer than Caucasian women of the same age, and breast cancer is the most common form of cancer in Hispanic/Latina women. The *Breast Cancer Patient Education Act of 2015* will ensure that patients of racial and ethnic minorities are fully informed about their treatment options.

Since 1998, federal law has required health plans that offer breast cancer coverage to provide coverage for breast reconstruction and prostheses. However, less than half of all women requiring a mastectomy are currently offered breast reconstruction surgery and only one in five elect to undergo the procedure. While there is no consensus as to why women are not informed of their potential care options post-mastectomy, a 2009 study conducted by the University of Michigan and Dana Farber determined that women did not undergo breast reconstruction because 1) they were not informed of their options and 2) they were not referred to a breast reconstruction surgeon.

The undersigned organizations work together to improve patient outcomes and quality of life. With your leadership, we will ensure that breast cancer patients are fully informed of their treatment options prior to mastectomy.

Sincerely,

American Association of Tissue Banks
American Association of Tissue Banks Policy Group
American College of Radiology

American Society of Plastic Surgeons
Curémonos
Evelyn's Breast Friends Forever
Georgia Society of Plastic Surgeons
Greater Sacramento Plastic Surgical Society
Living Beyond Breast Cancer
Maryland Society of Plastic Surgeons
Miami Society of Plastic Surgeons
Myself: Together Again
National Council of Women's Organizations
New Jersey Society of Plastic Surgeons
New York Regional Society of Plastic Surgeons
New York State Society of Plastic Surgeons
Northeastern Society of Plastic Surgeons
Ohio Valley Society of Plastic Surgeons
Oncology Nursing Society
Oregon Society of Plastic Surgeons
Society for Women's Health Research
Southeastern Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons
Susan G Komen
Triple Negative Foundation
Washington Society of Plastic Surgeons