

## **Passage of the Reducing Breast Cancer Disparities Act**

### **Why was the bill needed?**

The Metropolitan Chicago Breast Cancer Task Force, consisting of the region's leading breast cancer researchers, breast cancer organizations, care providers, advocates and survivors, documented shocking differences in the mortality rates of black and white women in Chicagoland. The Task Force shows **black women die from breast cancer at a rate 116% higher than white women in Chicago.**

Breast cancer disparities impact every area of Illinois. They affect Latino women and poor women of all racial and ethnic backgrounds. In rural and downstate Illinois – particularly farming communities - the cost of mammography continues to be a severe barrier to women who have very high-deductible insurance policies. **The Metropolitan Chicago Breast Cancer Task Force ([www.ChicagoBreastCancer.org](http://www.ChicagoBreastCancer.org)) and Susan G. Komen® - Chicago ([www.KomenChicago.org](http://www.KomenChicago.org)), the world's largest breast cancer organization, worked with Illinois lawmakers to draft a significant legislative plan to reduce breast cancer disparities statewide.**

### **What does the bill do?**

- Requires insurers to cover needed pain medication and therapy for breast cancer patients.
- Eliminates co-pays and deductibles for mammography screening.
- Requires state government to establish a 'patient navigation' program to help women in state healthcare programs such as FamilyCare and Medicaid access breast cancer treatment in a simple and timely manner.
- Requires state government to establish a 'patient reminder system' for women served by state healthcare programs including FamilyCare and Medicaid who are age appropriate for mammography but haven't received a mammogram in 18 months.
- Establishes an expert panel to create quality standards for mammography. Facilities meeting these standards will receive 'quality incentive' reimbursements when seeing women in the state's Medicaid and FamilyCare programs.
- Attempts to increase the number of mammography providers for underserved women by increasing Medicaid reimbursements for mammography including digital mammography.
- Reimburses community health centers if they provide mammography services to Medicaid beneficiaries and lets them partner with hospitals to provide mammograms.
- Establishes a 'bonus quality performance payment' for primary care providers in the state's Medicaid and FamilyCare programs with respect to receipt of annual mammograms.

### **Who supported the bill?**

The state's leading breast cancer organizations, including Susan G. Komen for the Cure's Illinois Affiliates, the American Cancer Society, Breast Cancer Network of Strength, ACCESS Community Health Network, the Metropolitan Chicago Breast Cancer Task Force, the Chicago Chapter of the National Black Nurses Association and leading hospitals joined forces with key legislators to support HB5192. State Representative Greg Harris, author of a landmark 2007 bill to support clinical breast exams, and House Majority Leader Barbara Flynn Currie were the first House sponsors. State Senators Jacqueline Collins, Iris Martinez, Heather Steans, Mattie Hunter and David Koehler led the charge for the bill in the State Senate.

**For more information contact Sean Tenner, Susan G. Komen® - Chicago, Board of Directors, at (312) 576-8822 / [Sean@The46thWard.org](mailto:Sean@The46thWard.org)**