

March 19, 2019

The Honorable Debbie Wasserman Schultz
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Schultz:

On December 16, 2015, we applauded you and the other original sponsors of the Protecting Access to Lifesaving Screening (PALS) Act when it was included in the Omnibus Spending Bill on passage, commending you for bringing clarity to the often conflicting information on breast cancer screening. Our women's health care organizations are especially appreciative of your leadership in working to extend the provision of the PALS Act to its current expiration date of January 1, 2021 since the concerns for protecting access to annual mammograms for women ages 40-49 remain an issue.

The PALS Act protects women's access to mammograms by placing a moratorium on the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) which currently recommends giving annual mammograms for women ages 40-49 a C rating. The PALS Act "time-out" moratorium allows the concerns from the medical and advocacy community to be addressed, while ensuring women's continued access to lifesaving breast screening. The USPSTF recommendation conflicts with other key clinical organizations and has resulted in widespread confusion. If allowed to be implemented, the USPSTF recommendation would put more than 22 million women at risk of losing coverage for mammograms without cost sharing.

We know that breast screening saves lives and the PALS Act has made a difference. A recent study by researchers from the University of Colorado, Duke University and the University of Michigan reported that mammograms have helped save up to 600,000 lives since 1989. In 2018 alone, the study reported that up to 46,000 lives were saved.^{1,2} **Due to the PALS Act, approximately 22 million women between the ages of 40-49 are guaranteed access to mammography with insurance coverage with no-copay.**³

The PALS Act matters and *we urge you to continue the fight for women's access to mammograms by not letting the Act expire.*

Sincerely,

American College of Radiology
American Women Unite for Breast Cancer Screening
Black Women's Health Imperative
Breast Friends
Bright Pink
Don't be a Chump! Check for a Lump!
DenseBreast-info, Inc.
FORCE (Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered)
Living Beyond Breast Cancer
Men Against Breast Cancer
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health
National Black Nurses Association
National Consortium of Breast Centers
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Medical Association
Prevent Cancer Foundation
Sharsheret
Society of Breast Imaging
Susan G. Komen
Tigerlily Foundation

Sources:

¹Hendrick, R. Edward & A. Baker, Jay & A. Helvie, Mark. (2019). Breast cancer deaths averted over 3 decades. *Cancer*. 10.1002/cncr.31954.

²US News and World Report, Feb 11, 2019. www.usnews.com/news/health-news/articles/2019-02-11/mammograms-helped-save-up-to-600-000-us-lives-since-1989-study (accessed March 14, 2019)

³US Census National Population by Characteristics: 2010-2017. www.census.gov/data/datasets/2017/demo/popest/nation-detail.html (accessed March 14, 2019)