



November 11, 2013

State of Michigan House of Representatives  
Health Policy Committee

Via email: David Mead, Health Policy Committee Clerk, [dmead@house.mi.gov](mailto:dmead@house.mi.gov)

On behalf of the four Susan G. Komen Affiliates serving Michigan, the Susan G. Komen Detroit Race for the Cure®, and Michigan breast cancer patients, survivors and activists, we write in support of the **Michigan Cancer Treatment Fairness Act (HB 4751)**. This legislation will allow equal access through insurance coverage of orally administered cancer drugs and intravenous cancer drugs.

Thanks to innovative medical research, many new cancer treatment drugs are administered in an oral form. Orally administered cancer drugs are expected to grow to at least 25 percent of available cancer treatments by the end of 2013, and oral therapies account for approximately 35 percent of the current oncology development pipeline. For many cancers, orally administered drugs have become the standard of care and may be the only treatment available for a particular disease subtype. Additionally, oral drugs offer benefits to cancer patients including ease and convenience of administration, greater patient autonomy and, often, fewer side effects.

While much progress has been made in developing these new oral cancer drugs, insurance coverage has not kept pace with innovation in medicine. The result has been patient cost-sharing obligations that are much higher for oral anti-cancer drugs than for drugs delivered intravenously or by injection. This disparity forces patients to face impossible choices between the treatment they need and the financial security of their families.

**Susan G. Komen believes health decisions should be made between a patient and her or his health care provider. These decisions depend on many factors such as age, type of cancer and the characteristics of the cancer. Deciding on a particular treatment option is as much a personal matter as it is a medical one. Treatment decisions should not be constrained by financial factors. People who are fighting cancer should be protected from high out-of-pocket medical costs that can lead to financial hardship and even bankruptcy.**

Komen supports efforts at the state level to eliminate the cost disparities in health insurance coverage for oral cancer drugs. We urge you to support the Michigan Cancer Treatment Fairness Act, requiring insurers to cover oral cancer drugs at a level no less favorable than the coverage provided for IV-administered treatments.

Komen volunteers and staff serving Michigan have long been committed to the fight against breast cancer. Together, we have invested nearly \$1.87 million in local communities this year alone for early detection and treatment of breast cancer and for breast health education and outreach. Collectively, since inception of each affiliate we have also contributed \$10.67 million to Susan G. Komen research grants that have helped treatment progress. As Michigan has the sixth highest breast cancer mortality rate in the country, we know how deeply important it is for all cancer patients to have fair and equal access to the therapies that may save their lives.

**We can address questions you may have about this and we strongly urge you to support HB 4751.**

Sincerely,

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c: Kathy Berta, Komen Advocacy Alliance