

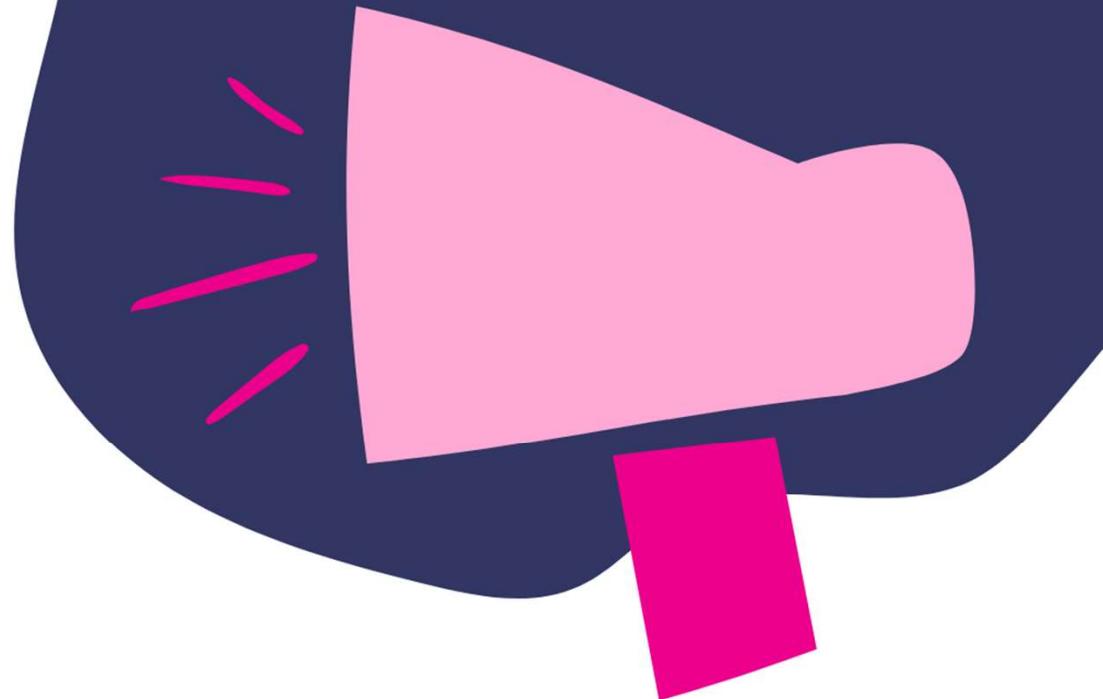


ADVOCACY MEETING

Spotlight on the Metastatic Breast
Cancer Access to Care Act

April 13, 2022

actionalerts
Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation | www.vbcf.org



AGENDA:

- **Welcome & Introductions:**
 - **Kirsta Millar, VBCF Policy Manager**
 - **Marylinn Minor, VBCF Board Member, NBCC Board Vice President**
 - **Jessica Ramirez, VBCF Board Member**
 - **Anne Woodward, VBCF Board Member**
- **VBCF's Advocacy Work**
- **Metastatic Breast Cancer Access to Care Bill Overview**
- **2022 National Breast Cancer Lobby Day Plans**

VBCF's Advocacy Goals:

- Support policies for Virginians **in all stages of the breast cancer journey** - screening, diagnosis, caregiving, treatment, survivorship, and end-of-life care
- Support legislation to enable Virginians to receive breast cancer screening and treatment **regardless of insurance status or ability to pay**
- Promote research initiatives **aimed at understanding and eradicating breast cancer**
- Support policies aimed at **breast cancer risk reduction**



State Level Advocacy

- Annual VBCF State Breast Cancer Advocacy Day
- Participate in state level coalitions
- Provide testimony & public comments
- Meet with legislators in & off-session



Senator Jennifer Boysko (D-86th)
Advocacy Day 2020



NATIONAL LEVEL ADVOCACY:

- VBCF was a Founding Member of the National Breast Cancer Coalition (NBCC)
- Annual National Breast Cancer Lobby Day



Rep. Abigail Spanberger (D-7th)
Lobby Day 2019



Zoom meeting with Rep. Morgan Griffith (R-9th)
Virtual Lobby Day 2020



VBCF Volunteer Advocates on Capitol Hill

Metastatic Breast Cancer Access to Care Act H.R. 3183/S. 1312

This bill would waive the waiting periods for Medicare (24 months) and Social Security Disability benefits (5 months) for eligible individuals living with metastatic breast cancer.



- Under current law, individuals diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer automatically qualify for disability benefits (SSDI) from the Social Security Administration (SSA) as long as they apply and meet the SSA's technical qualification rules. Once approved, there is a waiting period that can last up to 5 months.
- Following approval of SSDI, individuals with metastatic breast cancer are eligible for Medicare coverage based on their disability, regardless of age. But, there is then another waiting period for Medicare coverage to kick in and that can be up to 24 months.

Metastatic Breast Cancer Access to Care Act H.R. 3183/S. 1312

Why is this bill needed?

- Metastatic breast cancer (MBC) is cancer that has spread from the breast to the bones, lungs, or other parts of the body. *90% of breast cancer deaths are as a result of metastatic disease.*
- While there are treatments that may extend the lives of individuals with MBC, there is no cure. *The average life expectancy for patients diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer is 3 years (36 months).*
- Patients living with MBC often cannot work and therefore risk losing their health care coverage.
- Under current law, individuals with MBC may never receive the SSDI and Medicare benefits for which they are eligible. Waiving the waiting periods would allow patients to get access to the health care they need sooner and help lessen the stress and financial burden they are facing.
- Remember: *these are benefits that patients have already qualified for! They are just forced to wait to receive them.*

“As someone living with metastatic breast cancer, I know that this is a marathon, not a sprint. And access to treatment is so important. Why should I have to wait up to 2 years for the benefits I already qualify for?”

Anne, VBCF Board Member speaking about the Metastatic Breast Cancer Access to Care Act during 2021 National Breast Cancer Lobby Day

Metastatic Breast Cancer Access to Care Act H.R. 3183/S. 1312

Why should there be an exception for metastatic breast cancer patients?

- The average life expectancy for patients diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer is 3 years (36 months). *Every month counts.*
- Federal precedent: SSDI and Medicare have special considerations for those with end stage renal disease and Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) that waives the 24-month waiting period for Medicare coverage. In 2020, Congress waived the 5-month waiting period for SSDI for individuals with ALS.

Weren't these waiting periods put into place for a reason?

- In general, it's likely that some with people with a disability who apply for SSDI benefits coverage will recover enough to work again and therefore would not ultimately need these benefits. So, instituting a waiting period vs. automatic approval saves the government money. But, people with MBC will not recover.

What would this cost?

- While we do not have an official cost estimate or CBO score (from the Congressional Budget Office), we do know that relative to the total federal budget, the cost would be very small.

Metastatic Breast Cancer Access to Care Act H.R. 3183/S. 1312

Broad bipartisan support for this bill

Total Co-Sponsors (as of 4.12.2022)

House: 180

Senate: 26

**Need 218 in the House; 51 in the Senate to get to floor vote*

Five Virginia Representatives are already co-sponsors (as of 4.12.22):

- ✓ Rep. Connolly VA-11)
- ✓ Rep. Griffith (VA-09)
- ✓ Rep. Luria (VA-02)
- ✓ Rep. Scott (VA-03)
- ✓ Rep. Spanberger (VA-07)

Metastatic Breast Cancer Access to Care Act H.R. 3183/S. 1312

VA Legislator Targets for 117th Congress:

*#ALS Cosponsor; *Previous MBCACA cosponsor*



Rep. Ben Cline (R-6th)#



Rep. Donald McEachin (D-4thth)*



Rep. Bob Good (R-5th)



Rep. Jennifer Wexton (D-10th)#



Rep. Rob Wittman (R-1st)#+

2022 NBCC Lobby Day - May 3rd



Zoom meeting with Representative Jennifer Wexton (D-10th) during Virtual Lobby Day 2020



Lobby Day Basics

NBCC 2022 Priorities:

- Metastatic Breast Cancer Access to Care Act
- DOD (BCRP) FY23 funding - \$150 million



Social Media Blitz for Lobby Day 2022!

- Help get the attention of VA legislators by tagging them on Facebook or Twitter leading up to and on Lobby Day

- VBCF & NBCC will provide text and graphics for posts

Example: @Senator/Rep____ *We need your support to waive Medicare and SSDI waiting periods for people with metastatic breast cancer. Can the breast cancer community count on you to support HR3183/S1312?*

- Include hashtags: #vbcfconnection; #nbcc; #bcsm

- Goal: Make at least 2 posts on or leading up to Lobby Day



Questions & Discussion



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