

**R.J. Ours, State Government Relations Director
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
Written Testimony to the House Finance Committee
in Support of Senate Bill 24-086
April 15, 2024**

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee. I am R.J. Ours, State Government Relations Director for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, or ACS CAN, and I am here today to speak in support of Senate Bill 86.

I wish to thank the sponsors, Representatives Bird and Weinberg, for bringing this bill forward, along with Senators Michaelson Jenet and Rich. And thank you to our great partners at Susan G. Komen Colorado for their leadership in crafting this bill.

Early detection of cancer through screening reduces mortality from breast and cervical cancers. In addition to detecting cancer early, screening for cervical cancers can prevent these cancers by identifying removable precancerous lesions. However, access to these potentially lifesaving screenings is not always equitable, creating significant disparities in cancer outcomes. Our ability to continue to make progress against cancer relies heavily on eliminating the inequities that exist in the prevention and early detection of cancer.

That's why it's critical that Colorado continue to adequately support access to breast & cervical cancer screenings for women qualifying for screenings via the Women's Wellness Connection program. The program operates in coordination and with the support of the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program, created by the US Congress in 1990 and administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The program provides low-income, uninsured, and underinsured women

access to breast and cervical cancer screenings; patient navigation; case management; diagnostic services; and public education materials.

Nationally, the program is available in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, six U.S. territories, and 13 American Indian/Alaska Native tribes or tribal organizations. Despite the program's proven success, federal and state funding has failed to keep pace with inflation and patient need.

Increasing funding for the Women's Wellness Connection's breast & cervical cancer early detection program will better ensure that the program continues to adequately and equitably provide community-based breast and cervical cancer screening services to low-income, uninsured, and underinsured women throughout the Centennial State, especially in these early post-COVID years as women continue to catch up with delayed screenings and as some Coloradans continue to struggle with obtaining health care coverage.

Consequently, we at ACS CAN respectfully request that you support the passage of Senate Bill 86 this afternoon.

-- Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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