



## **House Health & Human Services Committee Testimony in Support of House Bill 6117**

**TO:** Rep. Susan R. Donovan, Chair,  
Rep. Joshua J. Giraldo, First Vice Chair,  
Rep. Brandon C. Potter, Second Vice Chair,  
& Members of the House Health & Human Services Committee

**FROM:** American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN)

**DATE:** April 10, 2025

**RE:** Support for House Bill 6117

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN). ACS CAN is the nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society advocating for evidence-based public policies to reduce the cancer burden for everyone. On behalf of our constituents, many of whom have been personally affected by cancer, we urge your support of House Bill 6117.

In Rhode Island, 7,480 will be diagnosed with cancer in 2025 and 2,110 will die from the disease.<sup>i</sup> Navigating the health care system can be confusing and complicated. Making decisions after receiving a complex medical diagnosis such as cancer is challenging for anyone, but particularly for populations that have been historically marginalized.

Patient navigation is the individualized assistance that helps a patient overcome health care system barriers from prevention and early detection of disease to accessing necessary access to quality health and psychosocial care. Oncology patient navigation extends across the full cancer continuum, beginning with screening and early detection, and extends through diagnosis, treatment, survivorship, and end-of-life. Access to patient navigation services can help cancer patients and survivors get the care they need.

Despite the fact that cancer death rates have been declining for several decades, not all people have benefited equally from the advances in prevention, early detection, and treatment that have helped achieve these lower rates. Patient navigation can help eliminate health disparities and reduce costs across the cancer care continuum by addressing the needs of people who have been historically marginalized and excluded as well as those living in under resourced communities.

Patient navigators have been shown to help increase cancer screenings rates, help patients better understand treatment options after diagnosis and help ensure patients receive the post treatment care they need in survivorship.<sup>ii</sup> Patient navigation offers tailored patient-centered cancer care and the opportunity to prioritize unique patient needs. Patient navigation also has a proven return on investment and can help identify diagnosis at earlier stages when less invasive and less costly treatment options are available to patients, often resulting in better outcomes and reduced overall

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costs.<sup>iii</sup> Lastly, it has been shown to increase patient retention and reduce provider administrative burdens.<sup>iv</sup>

For those reasons, we respectfully urge you to pass House Bill 6117. Please feel free to contact ACS CAN's Rhode Island Government Relations Director, Ryan T. Strik, at [ryan.strik@cancer.org](mailto:ryan.strik@cancer.org) or at (401) 259-1052 for any additional questions or information.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan Strik".

**Ryan T. Strik**  
Rhode Island Government Relations Director,  
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

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<sup>i</sup> American Cancer Society. Cancer Facts and Figures 2025.

<sup>ii</sup> Guide to Community Preventive Services. Cancer Screening: Patient Navigation Services to Increase Cervical Cancer Screening and Advance Health Equity. <https://www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/cancer-screening-patient-navigation-services-to-increase-cervical-cancer-screening.html>. Page last updated: January 24, 2023. Nelson HD, Cantor A, Wagner J, et al. Effectiveness of patient navigation to increase cancer screening in populations adversely affected by health disparities: a meta-analysis. *J Gen Intern Med*. 2020;35(10):3026-3035. doi:10.1007/s11606-020-06020-9

<sup>iii</sup> Kline, R. et al., (2019). Patient Navigation in Cancer: The Business Case to Support Clinical Needs, *JCO Oncology Practice*, <https://ascopubs.org/doi/full/10.1200/JOP.19.00230>. Natale-Pereira, A., Enard, K., Nevarez, L., Jones, L. (2011) The Role of Patient Navigators in Eliminating Health Disparities. *Cancer*, p. 3543-3552, <https://acsjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1002/cncr.26264>

<sup>iv</sup> Kline, R. et al., (2019). Patient Navigation in Cancer: The Business Case to Support Clinical Needs, *JCO Oncology Practice*, <https://ascopubs.org/doi/full/10.1200/JOP.19.00230>.