

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Aleksandar Cholakov, and I'm a constituent from Rumford, RI, writing in strong support of **H7276**, which would reduce financial barriers to breast cancer treatment. I'm also a volunteer with the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network.

This issue is deeply personal to me. On April 15th of last year, I lost my wife, Marialys, to metastatic breast cancer. She was just 40 years old. Our son turned three shortly after her passing.

Her cancer was first discovered in late 2022, and in 2023 we followed every step of recommended care – mammogram, biopsy, surgery, chemotherapy, radiation, and hormonal therapy. By early 2024, we believed she was in remission and beginning to recover.

But her cancer returned silently and aggressively. By the time symptoms became clear in March 2025, it had already spread to her liver and bones. She passed away just three and a half weeks later, after a 12-day hospitalization.

What I've learned from this experience is that timely access to care – from imaging to full treatment – can mean the difference between life and death. But for too many families, **cost-sharing becomes a barrier to that care**. Treatment delays caused by unaffordable out-of-pocket costs can lead to worse outcomes and greater suffering.

I know that no bill can undo what my family has gone through. But if H7276 can ensure that fewer patients delay or forgo treatment due to cost, then it will be a step toward saving lives and reducing long-term burdens on families and the health care system.

Thank you for considering this bill. I would be honored to speak further or share more of my family's story if helpful.

Sincerely,

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