



## New England Coalition for Cancer Survivorship

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March 10, 2010

Statement of the New England Coalition for Cancer Survivorship before Senate Chairwoman Susan Fargo, House Chairman Jeffrey Sanchez and Members of the Joint Committee on Public Health Regarding SB2271 Entitled "An Act Relative to Oral Cancer Therapy"

Chemotherapy that is infused at a clinic is paid as a medical benefit while pills are covered under prescription drug plans, allowing insurance companies to transfer costs to the patient.

Needless to say, the financial impact of this can be tremendous. I personally have a co-pay for my oral chemotherapy of \$75 every 3 weeks - and I feel fortunate. Based on the type of chemotherapy - others can pay upwards of \$1000 or more per month. The challenge of living with cancer is already hard enough without the addition of this financial stress.

But it is not just about finances. Quality of life is also important. Oral chemotherapy is a welcome alternative to the pain of being stuck with a needle, especially for those of us who have bad veins. Already battling fatigue, it removes the additional stress of having long drives into appointments.

In addition, having been a victim of workplace discrimination due to my cancer diagnosis, I also see oral chemotherapies as an option for people not to disclose their cancer diagnosis if they choose not to.

Oral chemotherapies are a blessing. A wonderful alternative for some - the only option for others - but only if people can have access to them to help save their lives.

The passage of this legislation will require insurance companies that provide coverage for IV chemotherapy treatments to also provide the same level of coverage for orally administered anticancer medication-an act that would help so many of your constituents. It is for this reason that we urge you to pass this important legislation for all patients undergoing chemotherapy treatment in the state.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Respectfully yours,

Janice McGrath  
President