

# U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Introduces bipartisan legislation to break down barriers to lifesaving cancer screenings

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*Legislation reauthorizes program that has provided breast and cervical cancer screening and diagnostic services to over six million women*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, U.S. Senators Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Susan Collins (R-ME) and Representatives Joe Morelle (D-NY-25) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA-08) led their colleagues in introducing the bipartisan *Screening for Communities to Receive Early and Equitable Needed Services (SCREENS) for Cancer Act* to reauthorize the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (NBCCEDP), a lifesaving program that provides breast and cervical cancer screening and diagnostic services for women who are low-income, uninsured, and underinsured who do not qualify for Medicaid. Since 1991, NBCCEDP has served more than 6.1 million women, detecting nearly 77,000 breast cancers and over 24,000 premalignant breast lesions

“Cancer touches every community across the country, but with proper screening and treatment, we can save lives and prevent heartache of families,” **said Senator Baldwin**. “The NBCCEDP has a proven track record of reaching underserved communities and providing preventative and diagnostic cancer services nationwide. I am proud to introduce this bipartisan legislation to promote preventative care and ensure everyone has access to these critical, lifesaving services.”

“Cancer prevention and screening programs are vital because the earlier this disease is caught, the better the prognosis,” **said Senator Collins**. “NBCCEDP

provides thousands of uninsured and underinsured Mainers with breast and cervical cancer screening, diagnostic, and treatment services each year. Our bipartisan legislation would reauthorize and strengthen this critical program, helping to improve the health of women in Maine and nationwide and ultimately saving lives.”

The *SCREENS for Cancer Act* would reauthorize NBCCEDP through 2028. The program, which is a partnership between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state health departments, provides public education, outreach, patient navigation and care coordination to increase breast and cervical cancer screening rates and reach underserved, vulnerable populations. Without access to early detection programs, many people who are uninsured are forced to delay or forgo screenings, which could lead to late-stage breast cancer diagnoses. This delay can mean that a person may not seek care until the cancer has spread beyond the breast, making it five times more expensive and harder to treat.

This *SCREENS for Cancer Act* would also increase flexibility to NBCCEDP grantees, allowing for a greater emphasis on implementing innovative evidence-based interventions and aggressive outreach to underserved communities through media, peer educators, and patient navigators. At current funding levels, NBCCEDP serves fewer than 15 percent of the estimated number of eligible women for breast cancer services. The *SCREENS for Cancer Act* provides additional funding to better support the program and ensure that more women are able to access services.

“Too many families across America know the pain of receiving a cancer diagnosis. This year alone, over 300,000 people in the United States will be diagnosed with breast cancer and another 14,000 will be diagnosed with cervical cancer,” **said Congressman Joe Morelle (D-NY)**. “My daughter, Lauren, battled breast cancer for two years with incredible courage, sharing her story and underscoring the importance of early detection. I’m proud to carry on her legacy by helping all women access the critical cancer screening services they need, regardless of their income—so fewer families will suffer the unimaginable loss of a loved one.”

“Early testing is a proven method for saving lives and improving outcomes of breast cancer diagnoses,” **said Congressman Fitzpatrick, co-chair of the Bipartisan Congressional Cancer Caucus**. “I’m proud to join a bipartisan, bicameral group of colleagues on the *SCREENS Act* to ensure that vulnerable and underserved communities have access to these life-saving screening services.”

“Screening is a key step in routine breast care but so many people are currently

unable to access it – the SCREENS for Cancer Act can change that,” **said Molly Guthrie, VP of Policy & Advocacy at Susan G. Komen.** “We have to make timely access to high-quality screening and diagnosis available to all, especially those in under-resourced communities where disparities in outcomes are highest, so that cancers can be caught early when there are more treatment options and prognosis is better.”

“People whose lives have been touched by cancer know early diagnosis is key to beating the disease and surviving it,” **said Kirsten Johnson, Secretary-designee for the Wisconsin Department of Health Services.** “The SCREENS for Cancer Act helps to reduce the burden of cancer for everyone and addresses inequities in access to care. We applaud Senator Baldwin for taking the initiative to ensure all Wisconsinites can reduce their cancer risk, receive timely diagnosis, access treatment, and have the chance to live life to the fullest.”

In the Senate, this legislation is also sponsored by Senators Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) and Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV).

The SCREENS Act is endorsed by the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, American Sexual Health Association, Brem Foundation to Defeat Breast Cancer, Check for a Lump, FORCE: Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered, Living Beyond Breast Cancer, Men Supporting Women With Cancer, National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women’s Health, National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship, National Comprehensive Cancer Network, National Women’s Health Network, Prevent Cancer Foundation, Sharsheret, Society of Breast Imaging, Susan G. Komen, The National Consortium of Breast Centers, Tigerlily Foundation, and Young Survival Coalition.

A one pager on this legislation can be found [here](#). Full text of the legislation can be found [here](#).

An online version of this release is available [here](#).