



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Life-Saving “Breast Density Information” Law In Effect

PHIL BOYLE January 25, 2013

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Life-saving “Breast Density Information” law that will help in the fight against breast cancer is now in effect in New York State.

The new law (Chapter 265), which unanimously passed both the Assembly and the Senate, is the most comprehensive breast density law in the country. It is designed to improve the early detection of breast cancer by informing women of their breast density and encouraging them to discuss with their physicians the potential benefits of additional screening tests.

The new law requires that every mammography report given to a patient with dense breast tissue will inform the patient in plain, non-technical language that she has dense breast tissue and that she should discuss the potential benefit of further screenings with her physician.

Women in New York are now the first in the nation that, by statute, will be informed if they have dense breasts. Research indicates that every year in New York at least 2,500 women with dense breasts leave their mammograms being told the results are “normal/negative” but who actually have invasive breast cancer. The ‘Breast Density Information’ law means women will now be told of their own density and its associated risks

and encouraged to discuss further ultrasound screening with their doctors.

According to leading medical studies, breast cancer is four to six times more likely in women with dense breast tissue, and mammograms fail to detect approximately 40% to 50% of tumors in dense tissue since this condition obscures their presence. Despite those facts, a recent Harris Interactive survey found that 95% of women do not know their breast density even though it is a risk factor, and less than one-in-ten women learn about breast density from their physician.