



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Griffo legislation requiring health insurers cover 3-D mammography signed by Governor

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO November 30, 2017

| ISSUE: **BREAST CANCER SCREENING, MAMMOGRAPHY SCREENING**

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ALBANY – State Sen. Joseph Griffo, R-Rome, announced today that Gov. Andrew Cuomo has signed legislation sponsored by Sen. Griffo requiring health insurers to cover modern 3-D mammography for breast cancer screenings. The legislation was sponsored in the state Assembly by New York City Assemblywoman Rebecca Seawright, D-Upper East Side, Yorkville and Roosevelt Island.

Breast cancer is one of the most common cancers among women in New York, according to the state Department of Health. Each year, over 15,000 women are diagnosed with breast cancer, according to the department, and almost 2,600 women die from the disease. An estimated one in eight women will develop breast cancer during her life.

Men also get breast cancer. While it is very rare, about 150 men are diagnosed with breast cancer each year across the state, according to the health department.

Tomosynthesis, or 3-D mammography, has proven to be a more consistent and reliable way of detecting breast cancer. It also has proven to be able to detect breast cancer earlier than traditional mammography and to reduce the incidence false-positives. Most insurance companies, however, do not provide coverage for this technology.

Sen. Griffo's legislation – [S4150](#) - requires insurers provide this coverage to women who wish to utilize this technology. The legislation will take effect 60 days after the Governor signs the bill.

"A breast cancer diagnosis can have a significant, life-changing impact on the lives of women and men and their families," **Sen. Griffo said.** "We must ensure that women and men have access to the best methods available when it comes to getting screened for breast cancer. Now, they will have another tool to better protect them from this horrible disease. I appreciate the Governor signing my legislation into law and for seeing what a valuable resource 3-D mammography can be."

"It is important to continue to expand access to breast cancer screenings and New York State is a leader in this movement," **Seawright said.** "Breast cancer is one of the most common cancers. Each year in New York, over 15,000 women are diagnosed with breast cancer. This bill clarifies that insurers would cover 3-D mammograms without co-pays or deductibles. Early detection is critical. At the time when the federal climate is stripping women's health coverage, the local government must act, and we did."

Former Lewis County General Hospital Oncology Navigator and Lowville resident Joanne Dicob, along with Robert Pfeiffer, director of radiology at the hospital, initially brought the issue of insurance companies not covering 3-D mammography to Sen. Griffo's attention.

“I am a breast cancer survivor and my insurance company denied me having the 3-D mammogram,” **Dicob said.** “I wanted every woman to have the opportunity to have the 3-D mammogram to detect breast cancer early. Thank you Sen. Griffo for sponsoring this very important bill that requires insurance companies to cover the 3-D mammogram.”

Over the past several years, New York State has taken steps to improve access to and coverage for breast cancer screening. In 2016, for instance, the Governor signed legislation:

- * Requiring 210 hospitals and hospital extension clinics to offer extended hours of screening for at least four hours per week to help women who have difficulty scheduling mammograms during the typical 9 a.m.-5 p.m. workday.

- * Eliminating annual deductibles, copayments and co-insurance payments for all screening mammograms, including those provided to women more frequently than current federal screening guidelines such as annual mammograms for women in their forties.

- * Eliminating cost-sharing for diagnostic imaging for breast cancer, including diagnostic mammograms, breast ultrasounds and breast MRIs for women at high risk for breast cancer.

- * Adding public employees of cities with a population of 1 million or more to the population of public employees in the state who are currently allowed four hours of leave for screening for breast cancer each year.

New initiatives also include mobile mammography vans, patient navigators, a public awareness campaign, community-based peer education programs and investments through the state-back venture capital fund to support cancer-related technologies.

A new text line also was unveiled that can help women find mammogram locations. State residents can text “Get Screened” to 81336. After submitting their zip code, they will receive

information about screening locations with extended hours near their home.

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RELATED LEGISLATION

2017-S4150

- Introduced

- ◦ In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate

- ◦ On Floor Calendar Assembly
 - On Floor Calendar Senate

- ◦ Passed Assembly
 - Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Requires certain health insurance policies to include mammography screening by breast tomosynthesis

February 03, 2017

Senate Floor Calendar

Sponsored by **Joseph A. Griffo**

Do you support this bill?