

Senator Pam Helming

Representing the 54th New York Senate District



IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 30, 2023

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Senator Helming Calls on Governor Hochul to Sign Bill She Co-Sponsored Increasing Access to Biomarker Testing

The legislation impacts patients fighting cancer, Parkinson's disease, and arthritis.

Senator Pam Helming today called on Governor Hochul to sign legislation she co-sponsors (S.1196-A), passed by the Senate and Assembly, increasing access to biomarker testing, which can help improve treatment for patients with cancer and other diseases.

Senator Helming said, "Over the last several years, significant and important advancements have been made with biomarker testing, unfortunately, insurance coverage for this precision testing is not keeping pace. If signed into law, health insurance policies would be required to cover biomarker testing for the diagnosis, treatment, and monitoring of a patient's disease when the test is supported by medical and scientific evidence. Covering this testing will give providers another tool to use to determine the best treatment plan for a patient, potentially improving life expectancy and outcomes for more people. This bill has the support of organizations such as the American Cancer Society, The Michael J. Fox Foundation, The Arthritis Foundation, and more than sixty medical advocacy groups across New York State. I am calling on the Governor to sign this important legislation so patients will no longer be denied access to this important advancement in medicine."

Over half of all new oncology drugs launched in the past five years require or recommend biomarker testing before use.

Mary Zelazny, CEO, of Finger Lakes Community Health adds, "This legislation for biomarker testing is very important and timely as it will offer all members of our rural and underserved communities' access to precision medicine that is critical to reducing poor health outcomes. Biomarker testing allows patients and their providers access to more accurate treatments for cancer and other diseases and serves to reduce barriers to quality healthcare by saving lives and creating healthier communities."

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