



November 1, 2023

Dear members of the Pennsylvania General Assembly,

On behalf of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) and Pennsylvania biomarker testing coalition partners, I write to you today to request your support of identical bills recently introduced in the Pennsylvania House and Senate: SB 954 (Senators Devlin Robinson and Lisa Boscola) and HB 1754 (Representatives Kyle Mullins and Bryan Cutler).

This legislation would improve access to guideline-indicated biomarker testing for Pennsylvanians impacted by cancer and other diseases. This legislation would require state regulated insurance plans, including Medicaid, to cover biomarker testing when supported by scientific and medical evidence.

Biomarker testing opens the door to precision medicine, which allows individuals suffering from cancer and other illnesses to be matched with the right treatment at the right time. Treatment with targeted therapy often requires diagnostic testing, known as biomarker testing, to analyze a patient's biological samples (e.g., blood, tumor tissue) to identify and evaluate specific markers like genes or proteins. Research shows that in cancer treatment, targeted therapy can improve patient survival and quality of life. When doctors connect patients to the most effective treatment for their illness, patients can avoid treatments that will be ineffective or have more adverse side effects. Biomarker testing can also be used to identify the likeliness of disease recurrence or progression, predict a drug's efficacy or likelihood of toxicity, and identify signs of disease recurrence before it is visible on imaging.

Unfortunately, not all communities are benefitting from the latest advancements in biomarker testing and precision medicine. Communities that have been marginalized including rural residents, communities of color and individuals with lower socioeconomic status are less likely to receive biomarker testing. In addition, those receiving care in nonacademic medical centers are less likely to benefit from biomarker testing. Failure to improve access to biomarker testing could exacerbate existing disparities in outcomes.

Insurance coverage for biomarker testing is failing to keep pace with innovations and advancements in treatment. A 2022 analysis found that 32% of Pennsylvanians are covered by an insurance plan that is more restrictive than the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) guidelines for biomarker testing of advanced breast, lung, melanoma, and prostate cancers. This is evidence that there are Pennsylvanians that could benefit from biomarker testing that are being left behind. Nine in 10 providers rely on NCCN guidelines in determining when to recommend biomarker testing for cancer patients.

While most current applications are in cancer, biomarker testing is increasingly important to the treatment of other diseases including arthritis, other autoimmune conditions, and rare diseases. There is research happening in many other areas including ALS, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and other neurological conditions, cardiology and more. ACS CAN is grateful to be joined by a robust coalition of partner organizations in supporting this game-changing legislation (listed below).

Pennsylvania has an opportunity to lead the nation in emerging best practices. Similar legislation has passed in 14 states and is being considered in many more around the country. In addition to improving the quality of life and outcomes for countless Pennsylvanians, biomarker testing has the potential to save individuals and the larger Commonwealth financially through bypassing ineffective treatments. This legislation will help remove barriers to biomarker testing to ensure that patients can unlock the value and cost-savings potential of precision medicine.

ACS CAN and the undersigned organizations ask for your support as this legislation is considered in the Pennsylvania General Assembly. We seek its passage in the 2023-24 legislative session. Thank you for your leadership and support. If you have questions or wish to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Donna Greco, MSW, PA Government Relations Director with the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network at [Donna.Greco@cancer.org](mailto:Donna.Greco@cancer.org) or 717.534.1075.

Sincerely,

**AiArthritis**  
**Aim at Melanoma**  
**ALS Association**  
**American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network**  
**American Lung Association**  
**Arthritis Foundation**  
**Autoimmune Association**  
**Biomarker Collaborative**  
**CancerCare**  
**Cancer Support Community/Gilda's Club**  
**CLL Society**  
**End Preeclampsia**  
**Exon20 Group**  
**Global Colon Cancer Association**  
**Go2 for Lung Cancer**  
**ICAN - International Cancer Advocacy Network**  
**KRAS Kickers**

**Lifesciences of Pennsylvania**  
**Lung Cancer Research Foundation**  
**LUNgevity Foundation**  
**Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc.**  
**MET Crusaders**  
**National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN)**  
**National Multiple Sclerosis Society**  
**National Donor Marrow Program/Be the Match**  
**National Organization for Rare Disorders**  
**Oncology Nursing Society**  
**One Cancer Place**  
**PDL1 Amplifieds**  
**Pennsylvania Medical Society**  
**Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association**  
**Susan G. Komen**  
**Triage Cancer**  
**VHL Alliance**