



Office of the City Clerk

City Hall
121 N. LaSalle St.
Room 107
Chicago, IL 60602
www.chicityclerk.com

Legislation Text

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Alderman Harry Osterman

4 8TH WARD

City Council - November 8, 2017

Resolution

WHEREAS, October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month and the City of Chicago has previously had the dubious distinction of having one of the highest breast cancer mortality racial disparity rates in the country; and

WHEREAS, In 2003, Black women in Chicago died from breast cancer at a rate 68% higher than White women and between 2005-2007 Chicago's Black women died 62% more often from breast cancer; and Latinas experience high rates of late stage breast cancer diagnosis and encounter similar barriers to accessing high quality care in their communities; and

WHEREAS, Today, the disparity in breast cancer mortality for Black women has dramatically decreased from 62% higher death rate to now 40%; and

WHEREAS, Collective efforts to improve outreach, navigation to high quality resources and timely, high quality screening and treatment have contributed to the reduction of this inequity between 2008-2013 by 35% through work of organizations like the Metropolitan Chicago Breast Cancer Task Force, the Helping her Live program, Sisters Working it Out and other community partners; and

WHEREAS, The needle is moving in the right direction and Chicago now leads the nation in reducing breast cancer mortality, still more needs to be done to eliminate this health inequity at an accelerated pace; and

WHEREAS, Women of color and low-income women have been found to receive less than optimal care in Chicago with their breast cancers more often missed on mammograms compared to other women as found by researchers at University of Illinois at Chicago; and

5533 NORTH BROADWAY • CHICAGO, IL 60640 • 773-784-5277 • Fax 773-784-5033

WHEREAS, Deficiencies in Chicago's healthcare system are perpetuated by structural racism and segregation of resources resulting in a lack of true accessibility to high quality care, which disproportionately afflicts Black, Brown and other communities of color in Chicago despite the fact that in some other large racially diverse cities, breast cancer disparities do not exist or are significantly lower; and

WHEREAS, Gaps within the health system in Chicago must be rectified to ensure that all citizens have access to high quality breast healthcare regardless of income, insurance plan or lack thereof, Zip Code, immigration status, race, class or sexual orientation; and

WHEREAS, The City of Chicago is applauded for investing significant resources in expanding access of free navigation services to women throughout Chicago who seek support in receiving breast health services and funding free mammograms at Breast Imaging Centers of Excellence, however more needs to be done to ensure the all women have an equitable chance at survival and that additional funds for outreach to accompany the navigation are available; and

WHEREAS, All Chicago women seeking a screening or diagnostic mammogram, other diagnostics or treatment services should have access to a Breast Center of Imaging Excellence and an Academic Commission on Cancer accredited Cancer Program as mandated for women enrolled in Medicaid by the Breast Cancer Excellence in Survival and Treatment (BEST) Act, legislation signed into Illinois law by Governor Bruce Rauner on August 21, 2015 but yet to be enacted; and

WHEREAS, All women in Illinois diagnosed with breast cancer would benefit from implementation of the BEST Act requirements for the creation of a breast cancer treatment quality program; and

WHEREAS, All women enrolled in Medicaid would benefit from implementation of the provisions in the BEST Act that require Illinois Medicaid to expand breast care navigation services; and

WHEREAS, Illinois' innovative statewide mammography program which was eliminated and defunded by the state in 2015, is vitally important for the assurance of high quality improvement for breast cancer screening, especially for safety net facilities which primarily serve women of color.

THEREFORE, A hearing is requested at the next City Council Meeting on Wednesday, November 8, 2017 to discuss the breast cancer mortality disparity, which disproportionately affects Black and Brown communities in the City of Chicago, representatives from the Chicago Department of Public Health along with the Cook County Department of Health are requested to appear and share pertinent data and recommendations on the subject of the racial disparity in breast cancer mortality in Chicago, and respond to the call to action to advocate for the reinstatement of the Statewide screening surveillance program and initiation of a Statewide breast cancer treatment quality program and patient navigation for Medicaid women seeking breast healthcare as required by the BEST Act.