February 16, 2016

The Honorable Toni G. Atkins, Speaker

California State Assembly

State Capitol, Room 219

Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 1795 (Atkins) – Support**

Dear Speaker Atkins:

AB 1795 will help ensure that women have timely access to receive the necessary services to detect and treat their cancers early by: (1) providing coverage for treatment for services under the Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment Program (BCCTP) for the duration of the period of treatment, and (2) expanding eligibility for breast cancer screening under the Every Woman Counts (EWC) program to symptomatic women under the age of 40.

The BCCTP and EWC programs provide necessary cancer treatment to low-income uninsured or underinsured individuals diagnosed with breast and/or cervical cancer.  Currently, the state-funded BCCTP is not aligned with the federally-funded BCCTP, causing gaps in service and treatment for women diagnosed and treated through the state-funded program. Under the state BCCTP, treatment coverage is limited to 18 to 24 month and includes a provision that denies coverage to a woman who is re-diagnosed with the same cancer at the original cancer site. The federal BCCTP, on the other hand, has no time limit of coverage and covers a re-diagnosis of cancer whether at the original cancer site or a different cancer site.

Passage of AB 1795 will also protect women under 40 who show symptoms of breast cancer by providing them with screening services under this program. Currently, the EWC program provides breast cancer screening services only for women ages 40 years and older. Thus, uninsured or underinsured women presenting breast cancer symptoms, who are under the age of 40, have to find screening services elsewhere. This makes it more likely that they will have a delayed diagnosis, which will be more difficult for them to receive the best treatment.

By removing state-imposed timelines for treatment and expanding access to symptomatic women under the age of 40, AB 1795 will save more lives. For these reasons, we are a proud supporter of AB 1795, and urge your support.

Sincerely,

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Signature

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