

April 4, 2011

The Honorable Anthony Portantino  
California State Assembly  
State Capitol, Room 2003  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Via Fax: (916) 319-2144

**RE: AB 137 - Support**

Dear Assemblyman Portantino,

We are writing on behalf of the Disability Rights Legal Center to thank you for sponsoring **AB 137**, which requires health plans and insurers to provide patients with information regarding recommended timelines for the screening and diagnosis of breast cancer.

Current medical advances allow for treatment which can eliminate breast cancer, but only when it is detected at an early stage, making early detection key to survival. However, early detection requires regular breast cancer screening. An individual's decision to have a mammogram should be based upon the specific risks of each individual woman and in consultation with her provider, rather than dictated based on her age. Unfortunately, high risk women can, and often do, develop cancer at an earlier age than the general population.

This bill will increase access to screening and education about breast cancer. It would allow the circumstances of a woman's medical history to determine when to have a mammogram, rather than a woman's age.

The **Disability Rights Legal Center** (DRLC) has worked to implement the civil rights of people with disabilities for over 30 years. We are the oldest cross-disability legal advocacy organization in the country. Our mission is to promote the rights of people with disabilities and the public interest in, and awareness of, those rights by providing legal and related services.

Through our **Cancer Legal Resource Center** (CLRC), we have unique knowledge and experience with laws and legislation that impact the rights of individuals diagnosed with cancer, cancer survivors, and caregivers. The CLRC, a national, joint program of the DLRC and Loyola Law School Los Angeles, has provided over 231,000 people with free information and resources on cancer-related legal issues, including access to care, insurance, government benefits, estate planning, and employment. Please visit [www.CancerLegalResourceCenter.org](http://www.CancerLegalResourceCenter.org) for more information.

The DRLC strongly supports AB 137, and we appreciate your dedication in the fight against cancer. This legislation is important, as it will increase access to mammograms for younger women and that may lead to a decrease in mortality rates from breast cancer. We look forward to working with you to ensure the passage of this bill.

Sincerely,



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