



February 9, 2022

Senator Feyen, Chairman
Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development
Re: Opposition Testimony on SB 912

Dear Chairman Feyen and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the 102 people diagnosed with cancer every day in Wisconsin and more than 285,000 survivors we represent, the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) opposes SB 912 - a bill that ties access to affordable health care for lower income persons to employment requirements. Cancer patients and survivors – as well as those with other complex chronic conditions – could be seriously disadvantaged and find themselves without Medicaid coverage because they are physically unable to comply.

Many cancer patients in active treatment are often unable to work or require significant work modifications due to their treatment.¹ Recent cancer survivors often require frequent follow-up visits² and suffer from multiple comorbidities linked to their cancer treatments.³ Cancer survivors are often unable to work or are limited in the amount or kind of work.

If individuals are suspended from coverage, they will likely have no access to affordable health care coverage, making it difficult or impossible for a cancer patient or recent survivor to continue treatment or pay for their maintenance medication. Being denied access to one's cancer care team could be a matter of life or death for a cancer patient or survivor and the financial toll that the penalty period would have on individuals and their families could be devastating.

Instead of this burdensome monitoring of the boundary of BadgerCare with these new proposed requirements and exemptions, ACS CAN encourages members of the state legislature to fully expand income eligibility for our state's Medicaid program and return millions of our federal taxpayer dollars to Wisconsin.

Fully expanding access to care for hard-working, low-income Wisconsinites is one of the most effective ways to prevent and detect cancer early, treat cancer effectively, and bolster the quality of life for patients undergoing cancer treatment. Preventing cancer is much less expensive than treating it and ensuring that low-income individuals and families continue have access to comprehensive, affordable health care coverage is one of the most critical ways that we can reduce cancer incidence and mortality. For countless low-income cancer patients and survivors, uninterrupted access to quality, affordable, accessible, and comprehensive health care coverage is a matter of life and survivorship. Seizing this

¹ Blinder VS, Gany FM. Impact of Cancer on Employment. *J Clin Oncol*. 2020;38(4):302-309.

doi:10.1200/JCO.19.01856

²National Cancer Institute. *Coping with cancer: Survivorship, follow-up medical care*. Accessed August 2021.

<https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/coping/survivorship/follow-up-care>.

³ Mehta LS, Watson KE, Barac A, Beckie TM, Bittner V, Cruz-Flores S, et al. Cardiovascular disease and breast cancer: Where these entities intersect: A scientific statement from the American Heart Association. *Circulation*. 2018; 137(7): CIR.0000000000000556.

opportunity through full access to BadgerCare will create a healthier workforce, boost our economy, reduce the amount of uncompensated care in our health care system and keep Wisconsin economically competitive – all goals that SB 912 fails to meet.

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network urges the members of the state legislature to reject this legislation and, instead, increase income eligibility for our state's Medicaid program. The most cost-effective solution to the issue of minor income fluctuations that interrupt Medicaid eligibility is full expansion of Medicaid up to 138% FPL.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sara Sahli". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sara" being more prominent than the last name "Sahli".

Sara Sahli

Wisconsin Government Relations Director
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network