**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO MEMORIALIZE THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO ENACT S. 1873, H.R. 1946, OR SIMILAR LEGISLATION TO ESTABLISH MEDICARE COVERAGE FOR MULTI‑CANCER EARLY DETECTION SCREENING TESTS, AND TO CONTINUE WORKING ACROSS PARTY LINES TO REDUCE CANCER DEATHS IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

Whereas, detecting cancer early, before it has spread throughout the body, saves lives. Cancers detected when still localized can be treated more effectively and have a five‑year cancer‑specific survival of approximately 90% compared with approximately 20% for cancers found after metastasis has occurred. Existing Medicare‑covered early detection tests, such as mammograms and colonoscopies, have led to a substantial reduction in age‑adjusted mortality; and

Whereas, diagnosing and treating cancer earlier often results in less invasive treatments for patients, which are also less expensive. According to peer‑reviewed literature, treatment of metastatic cancer is two times more costly than treatment of cancer before it metastasizes; and

Whereas, driving national and state strategies to broadly detect cancer earlier can help reduce pervasive health disparities since racial, ethnic, and geographic groups experience later stages of diagnosis, along with higher cancer incidence and mortality; and

Whereas, the benefits of early cancer detection to Medicare beneficiaries in South Carolina has been limited to five cancers. According to the National Cancer Institute’s Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results program, 71% of the 600,000 nationwide cancer deaths each year are from types of cancer without a Medicare‑covered early detection test; and

Whereas, it is estimated that 10,940 South Carolinians died of cancer in 2021, and that six of the top ten causes of cancer death in South Carolina have no recommended screening test; and

Whereas, age is the leading risk factor for cancer, placing Medicare beneficiaries in South Carolina at elevated risk. Americans who are sixty‑five years of age and older are more than seven times as likely as Americans who are under sixty‑five years of age to be diagnosed with cancer; and

Whereas, several innovative private and academic efforts are engaged in research, including advanced clinical trials to develop multi‑cancer early detection blood‑based tests. Published data indicate that these tests can screen for many cancers at the same time, including rare cancers, with one example currently able to screen for more than fifty cancers; and

Whereas, multi‑cancer early detection tests can complement the covered early detection tests enacted by Congress, and in South Carolina, and extend the benefits of early detection to more cancers and more Americans. Medicare coverage of comprehensive multi‑cancer early detection screening tests could substantially transform cancer care for South Carolinians, and the Medicare law needs modernizing to provide timely coverage and keep pace with medical innovation; and

Whereas, the Honorable Tim Scott, United States Senator from South Carolina, has cosponsored the Medicare Multi‑Cancer Early Detection Screening Coverage Act, introduced by Senator Mike Crapo of Idaho, and with bipartisan colleagues Senators Michael Bennet of Colorado, Ben Cardin of Maryland, and John Barrasso of Wyoming. Meanwhile, Representative Terri Sewell of Alabama has introduced a companion bill in the U.S. House of Representatives, which has bipartisan support, including Representatives Jodey Arrington of Texas, Richard Hudson of North Carolina, and Dr. Raul Ruiz of California. This effort has the support of more than three hundred stakeholder organizations, representing all fifty states, including many of the most respected cancer advocacy organizations in the country, and including the support of advocates here in South Carolina. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the Senate of the State of South Carolina, by this resolution, commend Senator Scott and memorialize the United States Congress to enact S. 1873, H.R. 1946, or similar legislation to establish Medicare coverage for multi‑cancer early detection screening tests, and to continue working across party lines to reduce cancer deaths in South Carolina.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the President of the United States, Governor Henry McMaster, and each member of the South Carolina Congressional Delegation.

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