



Testimony by John Hoctor, Managing Director of Advocacy

Georgia Senate Regulated Industries Committee, March 21, 2024

My name is John Hoctor, and I am managing director of advocacy at the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. We thank the Chairman and the committee for allowing a hearing on this bill. Access to health insurance is the number one determinant of cancer survivorship. But right now, more than 400,000 hardworking Georgians live in the coverage gap, meaning they make too much money to qualify for Medicaid and not enough to afford private insurance.

These hard-working Georgians are farmers, veterans, childcare workers and other caregivers. We must ensure these families and individuals have access to affordable, comprehensive health insurance that gives them access to screenings to find cancers at an early stage, leading to higher survival rates and more affordable treatment.

Georgians in the coverage gap include 42-year-old grocery store clerk LaShonda Harrell, who has stage IV metastatic breast cancer. She needs a potentially lifesaving scan to determine cancer spread. However, without any coverage, she cannot afford to get it. She would qualify for PeachCare Plus. Closing the coverage gap is also a deal Georgia can't turn down. Other states have been reaping the benefits of the federal tax dollars that Georgians are sending to Washington D.C. With the 90% federal match rate and an additional 5% on new enrollees for two years, PeachCare Plus will keep more than \$4 billion tax dollars right here in Georgia.

Ms. Harrell and hundreds of thousands of your constituents without health care don't have another year to wait. It's heartening to see renewed interest in solving Georgia's health care crisis. We urge lawmakers to agree on a bipartisan, Georgia-based solution to closing the coverage gap in 2024.