

Chair Bates, Chair Nathanson, and members of the Committee

April 2, 2015

My life changed radically in May of 2001. After being diagnosed with breast cancer I spent about six months undergoing radiation and working to get my strength back. As a high school teacher I had a busy work life, I had two teenage/college age daughters and helped on our Christmas Tree farm.

When you get a diagnosis of a serious illness many will say you immediately start examining your life and the values by which you live. While it was a journey I would not choose, I now value what I learned about myself and my family.

Within a year of my diagnosis, I joined the Komen Oregon /SW Washington affiliate as a volunteer advocate. My background as a Social Studies teacher was a natural fit for speaking on behalf of the organization and my experience as a survivor, I believe, lent credibility to my words.

As a teacher I had great insurance. As a wife, mother, sister, and daughter I had exceptional support on my journey. Early detection through a routine check up meant I was diagnosed early with at that time 95% survival rate. Many in our community are not so blessed. Some have inadequate insurance, some none. They still have the roles of wife, mother, sister and daughter to fill. Life does not stop when you are a cancer patient and one certainly does not want life to stop.

In the intervening years we have had success in the funding and treatment strategies which have been developed. All of which have resulted in a now 99% survival rate with early detection and treatment. Further, in May of last year I joined a research study concerning the issue of falling among chemo patients. As I am sure you are aware, the risk of falling among these survivors rises significantly. The first night of the this class, not one but two participants told me that without The Breast and Cervical Cancer Program funding they would have had no treatment.

And therein lies the issue about which we speak to you to day. Early detection saves lives and is less costly than late stage treatment. This funding for the BCCP (SB 5526) means more Oregonians develop awareness and access to screening in order to save a wife, mother, sister, daughter or husband, father.....

I thank you for this opportunity and will happily answer any questions you may have.

Jan Franke  
Survivor and Komen Advocate