

Gov. Pritzker Expands Insurance Coverage for Mammograms, Other Breast Cancer Screenings

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DEKALB – Governor JB Pritzker signed legislation today expanding health insurance coverage for mammograms and other breast cancer screenings.

“When it comes to breast cancer in the United States, its frequency, proper screening, and mortality vary vastly across racial and ethnic groups. We cannot and should not tolerate the disparities that come from institutional failures,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “At a time when too many states – and the federal government – are in the business of

destabilizing women's health care, Illinois will stand on the side of patients. From breast cancer to youth Epi-Pens to Lyme disease, we're making Illinoisans' coverage better suit their needs."

The new law expands both private insurance and Medicaid to cover several preventative measures to help women detect breast cancer. Mammograms, ultrasounds and MRIs will now be covered when deemed medically necessary by a physician, advanced practice nurse or physician assistant. Senate Bill 162 takes effect on January 1, 2020.

According to the Illinois Department of Public Health, upwards of ten thousand women in Illinois are diagnosed with breast cancer each year, and the risk of getting breast cancer has increased for black women and Asian and Pacific Islander women over the last decade. With the new law increasing access to preventative care, early detection and treatment can help save lives.

"About 10 percent of initial mammogram results require a subsequent diagnostic mammogram," said Sen. Linda Holmes (D-Aurora). "The second look can arguably be the most important test in the screening process, so this coverage restriction had to be lifted. This new law could save women's lives."

"This new law will allow us to continue to make major strides to prevent breast cancer and ensure that women have access to the screenings and life-saving care they need," said Rep. Jeff Keicher (R-Sycamore).

"Everyone should have the ability to access life-saving health care," said Jennifer Welch, President & CEO of Planned Parenthood of Illinois. "By eliminating cost-sharing for screening mammograms and adding coverage for diagnostic mammograms, this legislation eliminates another obstacle that makes it difficult for people to access the care they need. We hope this legislation will lead to better health outcomes for Illinoisans."