

June 1, 2015

Senate Chairman Jason Lewis
House Chairwoman Kate Hogan
Joint Committee on Public Health
Room 511B/Room 130
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Re: ASPS Support for Massachusetts House Bill 1953

Dear Chairman Lewis, Chairwoman Hogan and Honorable members of the Joint Committee on Public Health:

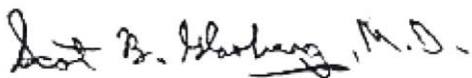
On behalf of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS), I write in strong support of Massachusetts House Bill (H.B.) 1953, which provides the information necessary to educate women on the availability and coverage of their care options after undergoing treatments for breast cancer. ASPS is the largest association of plastic surgeons in the world, representing more than 7,000 members and 94% of all American Board of Plastic Surgery board-certified plastic surgeons in the United States.

Since 1998, health plans that offer breast cancer coverage are required by federal law to provide for breast reconstruction and prostheses, even if such reconstruction is delayed after other treatments. While some eligible women with breast cancer undergo breast reconstruction, many women – particularly those of racial and ethnic minority groups – are not informed about their care options. This is particularly concerning as African-American women under the age of 40 have a greater incidence of breast cancer than Caucasian women of the same age. Furthermore, breast cancer is the most common cancer among Hispanic women.

While there is no consensus as to why women are not informed of their potential care options post-mastectomy, a 2009 study conducted by the University of Michigan and Dana Farber determined that women did not undergo breast reconstruction because 1) they were not informed of their options and 2) they were not referred to a breast reconstruction surgeon. As breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer type among women in Massachusetts, it is important to ensure that all patients are educated on their care options throughout the treatment process.

This legislation will help empower women to make the best care choices for their unique circumstances by ensuring that they are properly educated on all available care options. We **strongly support** H.B. 1953 as it is currently written and ask you to move this measure to the floor of the House for full consideration. If you have any questions or need further assistance, please feel free to contact ASPS Senior Manager of Advocacy and Government Affairs, Patrick Hermes, at phermes@plasticsurgery.org

Sincerely,



Scot B. Glasberg, M.D.

President, American Society of Plastic Surgeons

cc. Rep. William Galvin