

March 7, 2024

Dear Chair Klein and Committee Members:

As a triple negative breast cancer survivor and a volunteer for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, I'm writing to share my support of SF4423.

When I was receiving treatment for my cancer, I faced a side effect that many cancer patients face: losing my hair. **Experiencing a cancer diagnosis makes you feel like you don't have control of anything, including your appearance. Losing my hair felt like losing a part of myself.** I was born with a full head of hair and my bald scalp had never seen the light of day, until the day it all fell out.

There's so much more in this world that makes people who they are, but being able to look in the mirror and not recognize yourself had a bigger emotional impact on me than I ever expected. My body became completely foreign to me. It was doing things it's never done before in response to life saving treatment and in order to achieve my highest chance of survival, I chose to have a bilateral mastectomy. Everything I knew about my body and how it would react to things was different. These life-saving treatments were expensive (in more than just the monetary sense) and this left little room for me to be able to afford a wig or prosthetics to become a little more recognizable to myself. **When I finally was able to obtain a wig, I felt the first sense of normalcy I'd felt in a long time. People didn't automatically look at me as if I was sick and I felt a little bit more like the Haley I remembered.**

Giving patients access to wigs may not seem like the biggest issue cancer patients face, but it's one less burden we can remove from people who are fighting every day to just survive. I hope you will consider supporting SF4423 to help ease the burden of a cancer diagnosis, even just a little bit.

Thank you,

Haley Erickson

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