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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2014

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A N A C T

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY

Introduced By: Senators Doyle, Nesselbush, Gallo, Lynch, and Ottiano

Date Introduced: February 27, 2014

Referred To: Senate Health & Human Services

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Title 23 of the General Laws entitled "HEALTH AND SAFETY" is hereby  
2 amended by adding thereto the following chapter:

3 CHAPTER 12.9

4 DENSE BREAST NOTIFICATION AND EDUCATION

5 **23-12.9-1. Short title.** – This chapter shall be known and may be cited as "The Dense  
6 Breast Notification and Education Act."

7 **23-12.9-2. Legislative findings.** – (a) Studies for decades conclude that breast density is  
8 the strongest predictor of the failure of a mammogram to detect cancer. National surveys report  
9 that the great majority of women are totally unaware of their breast tissue composition and its  
10 impact on their breast health.

11 (b) Women report that they want to know their breast tissue composition. Studies show  
12 that having dense breasts raises the risk of developing breast cancer fourfold to sixfold. It is a  
13 greater risk factor than having a mother or sister with the disease. One in eight (8) U.S. women  
14 (one in six (6) in Rhode Island) gets breast cancer, many with no family history. Women have a  
15 right to know if they are at risk. Women who do not know they have dense breasts lack the same  
16 access to early detection of breast cancer.

17 (c) As of 2013, thirteen (13) states have breast cancer notification laws and many more  
18 are currently introducing bills for legislation. State legislation ensures that all women are  
19 informed of this critical breast-health information to enhance informed discussions with their

1 [healthcare providers about their personal screening options.](#)

2 **23-12.9-3. Public policy goals – Department of health.** – [The department of health,](#)  
3 [through the Rhode Island Cancer Council, is authorized and mandated to implement the following](#)  
4 [public health policy goals as they relate to dense breast notification in Rhode Island.](#)  
5 [Commencing on October 1, 2014, all health care facilities that perform mammography](#)  
6 [examinations shall include in the summary of the mammography report to be provided to a](#)  
7 [patient, information that identifies the patient's individual Breast Tissue Classification based on](#)  
8 [the Breast Imaging Reporting and Data System established by the American College of](#)  
9 [Radiology. If the facility determines that a patient has heterogeneously or extremely dense](#)  
10 [breasts, the summary of the mammography report shall also include the following notice:](#)

11 ["Your mammogram indicates that you have dense breast tissue. Dense breast tissue is](#)  
12 [relatively common and is found in about forty percent \(40%\) of women. The presence of dense](#)  
13 [tissue can make it more difficult to detect cancers in the breast by mammography because it can](#)  
14 [hide small abnormalities and may be associated with an increased risk. Hence, you may benefit](#)  
15 [from supplementary screening tests, which may include a breast ultrasound screening or a breast](#)  
16 [MRI examination, or both, depending on your individual risk factors.](#)

17 [We are providing this information to raise your awareness of this important factor and to](#)  
18 [encourage you to discuss your dense breast tissue, as well as other breast cancer risk factors, with](#)  
19 [your health care provider. Together, you can decide which screening options are right for you.](#)

20 [A report of your results was sent to your physician. You should contact your physician if](#)  
21 [you have any questions or concerns about this report."](#)

22 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
A N A C T  
RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY

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1           This act would establish the "Dense Breast Notification and Education Act," which  
2 would require the health care facility which performed a mammogram to notify the patient of any  
3 finding of dense breast tissue along with basic information about dense breast tissue as it relates  
4 to screening and risk factors for breast cancer.

5           This act would take effect upon passage.

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