



February 6, 2024

The Honorable Mark Sickles, Chair
House Committee on Health and Human Services
House Committee Room C - 206
900 E Main St
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Chair Sickles and Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services,

The Virginia Association of Hematologists and Oncologists (VAHO) and the Association for Clinical Oncology (ASCO) are pleased to support HB 278, which would provide coverage of fertility preservation services for Virginia Medicaid patients with cancer. We encourage the committee to vote the bill forward to the full House.

VAHO is a professional organization whose mission is to help foster the highest quality of cancer care in the state of Virginia. VAHO members are a community of oncologists, nurse practitioners, physician assistants and other allied health professionals deeply involved in care of our cancer patients. ASCO is a national organization representing physicians who care for people with cancer. With nearly 50,000 members, our core mission is to ensure that cancer patients have meaningful access to high quality, equitable cancer care.

VAHO and ASCO believe that as part of education and informed consent before cancer therapy, health care providers should address the possibility of infertility with both male and female patients treated during their reproductive years. Providers should also be prepared to discuss fertility preservation options and/or refer all potential patients to appropriate reproductive specialists. As such, VAHO and ASCO advocate for coverage of procedures consistent with ASCO guidelines for a covered patient of reproductive age who has been diagnosed with cancer but has not started cancer treatment (including chemotherapy, biotherapy or radiation therapy treatment) in accordance with [guidelines](#) developed by our affiliate organization, the American Society of Clinical Oncology.

We encourage providers to advise patients regarding potential threats to fertility as early as possible in the treatment process to allow for the widest array of options for fertility preservation. VAHO and ASCO strongly support HB 278 and encourage the committee to pass this bill as a step to ensure coverage for fertility preservation services for Medicaid patients with cancer. If you have questions or would like assistance on any issue involving the care of individuals with cancer, please contact Aaron Segel at ASCO at aaron.segel@asco.org.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Richard Ingram in black ink.

Richard Ingram, MD

President

Virginia Association of Hematology and Oncology

Handwritten signature of Everett E. Vokes in black ink.

Everett E. Vokes, MD, FASCO

Chair of the Board

Association for Clinical Oncology