



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
PLASTIC SURGEONS®



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FOUNDATION™

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ASPS ISSUE BRIEF

Advancing Women's Health Coverage Act

Ensuring full access to all types of breast reconstruction for breast cancer patients

Congressional Request

House: Cosponsor the *Advancing Women's Health Coverage Act* to ensure coverage of the full spectrum of breast reconstruction options, including microsurgical reconstruction, reconstruction after lumpectomy, and custom breast prostheses.

Senate: Introduce the *Advancing Women's Health Coverage Act*.

Summary of the Bill

The *Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act (WHCRA) of 1998* guaranteed coverage for breast reconstruction after mastectomy, a landmark step in cancer care. However, the law has not been updated in over 25 years. In that time, clinical standards evolved dramatically. Today, many more patients undergo breast-conserving surgeries instead of mastectomy than when the original law was passed. Others may require microsurgical procedures or approaches to complications management that did not exist in 1998. These things were not explicitly contemplated under the original statute.

The *Advancing Women's Health Coverage Act (AWHCA)* will bring the 1998 law in line with today's clinical standards and protect patient access. Despite the current law's guarantees, insurers have increasingly restricted in-network access to certain types, techniques, and modalities of reconstruction. The AWHCA reaffirms that federally regulated private health insurance plans must not only cover all medically appropriate forms of breast reconstruction – including after breast-conserving surgeries – but also strengthens WHCRA's clear original intention to include necessary revision surgeries, custom breast prostheses for patients who choose them, and lymphedema treatment. Additionally, it mandates that payers make these services available within the patient's insurance network. Without this modernization, coverage for optimal treatment approaches remains out of reach for too many patients.

The Solution

The *Advancing Women's Health Coverage Act* is endorsed by the American Society of Plastic Surgeons and Susan G. Komen® and is being led by Representatives Kat Cammack (R-FL-03), Debbie Dingell (D-MI-06), Young Kim (R-CA-40), Lucy McBath (D-GA-07), Ashley Hinson (R-IA-02), and April McClain Delaney (D-MD-06), along with a growing coalition of bipartisan lawmakers. Congress must pass the *Advancing Women's Health Coverage Act* to restore adequate access to breast reconstruction for women with federally regulated private insurance. The bill clarifies that reconstruction following lumpectomy is covered, ensures access to microsurgical breast reconstruction, includes treatment for lymphedema, and guarantees that all medically appropriate options, including custom breast prostheses and complex revision surgeries, are available within a patient's insurance network. These updates are essential to align federal law with current clinical standards and eliminate insurer practices that have restricted access to necessary care.

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