



1/21/25

The Honorable Donna Bailey  
Chair, Joint Standing Committee on Health  
Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services  
Maine Senate  
3 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333

The Honorable Kristi Mathieson  
Chair, Joint Standing Committee on Health  
Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services  
Maine House of Representatives  
2 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Chairs Bailey and Mathieson:

On behalf of GSK, we are writing in support of LD 107, a bill that would improve access to biomarker testing—an innovation that leads to more precise treatments and better outcomes on a variety of health conditions for patients.

GSK is a global biopharma company with a purpose to unite science, talent, and technology to get ahead of disease together. We focus on the science of the immune system and advanced technologies to impact health at scale. GSK works to prevent and treat diseases, including cancer, with vaccines, specialty, and general medicines. We support policy solutions that improve patient outcomes, reward innovation, and achieve higher value care.

Biomarkers are detectable biological signals that can be used to test and treat a variety of conditions, such as autoimmune disorders, organ transplants, sickle cell, and rare diseases.<sup>1,2,3,4</sup> As one example, biomarker testing is used to inform the diagnosis, treatment, and management of cancer.<sup>5</sup> Biomarker testing has improved early cancer detection and “revolutionized cancer treatment,”<sup>6</sup> making it indispensable for precision medicine and personalized treatment regimens.

Unfortunately, health insurance coverage for biomarker testing is not keeping pace with innovation. A survey conducted by CancerCare in 2023 found that 29 percent of participants with cancer did not have biomarker testing covered by their insurance plan and 25 percent required prior authorization or approval from their health plan.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> National Organization for Rare Disorders. Biomarker Testing: Beyond Oncology. March 2024. [https://rarediseases.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Biomarker-testing\\_nononcology-fact-sheet.pdf](https://rarediseases.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Biomarker-testing_nononcology-fact-sheet.pdf). Accessed October 29, 2024.

<sup>2</sup> Siegel RL, Giaquinto AN, Jemal A. Cancer statistics, 2024. *CA Cancer J Clin*. 2024 Jan-Feb;74(1):12-49. Accessible at <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38230766/>.

<sup>3</sup> Bhandari NR, Hess LM, He D, Peterson P. Biomarker Testing, Treatment, and Outcomes in Patients With Advanced/Metastatic Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer Using a Real-World Database. *J Natl Compr Canc Netw*. 2023 Sep;21(9):934-944.e1. Accessible at <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37673115/>.

<sup>4</sup> Beatriz D'Avo Luis A, Seo MK. Has the development of cancer biomarkers to guide treatment improved health outcomes? *Eur J Health Econ*. 2021 Jul;22(5):789-810. Accessible at <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33783662/>.

<sup>5</sup> American Cancer Society. Biomarker Tests and Cancer Treatment. September 21, 2022.

<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/diagnosis-staging/tests/biomarker-tests.html>. Accessed August 1, 2024.

<sup>6</sup> Passaro A, Al Bakir M, Hamilton EG, et al. Cancer biomarkers: Emerging trends and clinical implications for personalized treatment. *Cell*. 2024 Mar 28;187(7):1617-1635. Accessible at <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38552610/>.

<sup>7</sup> CancerCare. Biomarker Testing Helps Tailor Cancer Treatment, Improve Outcomes, Says New CancerCare Survey [Press Release]. April 12, 2023. [https://www.cancercare.org/press/releases/236-2023\\_04\\_12](https://www.cancercare.org/press/releases/236-2023_04_12). Accessed August 1, 2024.



Access to biomarker testing is also an equity issue. Marginalized communities, including people of color, individuals with lower socioeconomic status, and rural communities, are less likely to receive biomarker testing.<sup>8,9,10</sup> A 2023 survey by the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) found that 60 percent of cancer patients in the highest income bracket had biomarker testing compared to 42 percent of cancer patients in the lowest income bracket.<sup>11</sup> Another survey by ACS CAN found that 66% of oncology providers report the lack of insurance coverage for desired biomarker testing is a moderate or significant barrier to patient access.<sup>12</sup>

LD 107, however, would improve access to biomarkers by requiring state-regulated plans, including Medicaid, to cover comprehensive biomarker testing when supported by medical and scientific evidence, including nationally recognized clinical practice guidelines.

For these reasons, GSK urges your AYE vote on LD 107 to improve access to biomarker testing for a variety of conditions. We appreciate your consideration of our input.

Sincerely,

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<sup>8</sup> Journal of Clinical Oncology. Identifying barriers to equitable biomarker testing in underserved patients with NSCLC: A mixed - methods study to inform quality improvement opportunities. Abstract presented at: The 2021 ASCO Quality Care Symposium; September 21, 2021. [https://ascopubs.org/doi/abs/10.1200/JCO.2020.39.28\\_suppl.123](https://ascopubs.org/doi/abs/10.1200/JCO.2020.39.28_suppl.123). Accessed August 1, 2024.

<sup>9</sup> American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. Survivor Views: Biomarker Testing September 2023. [https://www.fightcancer.org/sites/default/files/national\\_documents/survivorviews\\_biomarkers.pdf](https://www.fightcancer.org/sites/default/files/national_documents/survivorviews_biomarkers.pdf). Accessed August 1, 2024.

<sup>10</sup> Norris RP, Dew R, Sharp L, et al. Are there socio-economic inequalities in utilization of predictive biomarker tests and biological and precision therapies for cancer? A systematic review and meta-analysis. BMC Med. 2020 Oct 23;18(1):282. Accessible at <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33092592/>.

<sup>11</sup> American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. Survivor Views: Biomarker Testing September 2023. [https://www.fightcancer.org/sites/default/files/national\\_documents/survivorviews\\_biomarkers.pdf](https://www.fightcancer.org/sites/default/files/national_documents/survivorviews_biomarkers.pdf). Accessed August 1, 2024.

<sup>12</sup> American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. Survey Findings Summary: Understanding Provider Utilization of Cancer Biomarker Testing Across Cancers. [https://www.fightcancer.org/sites/default/files/national\\_documents/provider\\_utilization\\_of\\_biomarker\\_testing\\_polling\\_memo\\_dec\\_2021.pdf](https://www.fightcancer.org/sites/default/files/national_documents/provider_utilization_of_biomarker_testing_polling_memo_dec_2021.pdf). Accessed August 1, 2024.