

*132nd Legislature*  
**Senate**  
**of Maine**  
*Senate District 31*

*Senator Donna Bailey*  
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*Augusta, ME 04333-0003*  
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*Testimony of Senator Donna Bailey introducing*  
**LD 784, An Act to Require Health Insurance Coverage for Specialized Risk Screening for First Responders and Other Public Safety Professionals**  
*Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services*  
*Thursday, March 13, 2025*

Representative Gramlich, and Esteemed Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services, as you know, my name is Donna Bailey, and I proudly represent Senate District 31, which includes Buxton, Old Orchard Beach, and Saco. Today I am pleased to introduce my bill LD 784, “An Act to Require Health Insurance Coverage for Specialized Risk Screening for First Responders and Other Public Safety Professionals.”

Last year, I presented the original version of the bill, LD 444, before this committee. I am grateful that a majority of my colleagues on this committee supported it. Unfortunately, despite passing both the Senate and the House, with strong, bipartisan support, the Chief Executive held the bill, and she ultimately pocket-vetoed it.

The amended version before you all today still seeks to address the same problem: Many health insurance plans and policies do not cover preventative cancer and other screenings for firefighters, first responders, and police officers.

As I introduce this bill, I would like to share a story from Saco Fire Department Lieutenant Sarai Briggs. Lieutenant Briggs, a mother of three, decided to pay for the cost of a cancer screening. Even though she had no symptoms, the test detected thyroid cancer. Luckily for Lieutenant Briggs, she made the decision at the right time: The cancer was caught early – and now she is cancer free.

While Lieutenant Briggs was willing to spend the money for the cancer screening, many others do not or cannot make that same decision. As she told Channel 8 News, “I know for a fact that people don't; they don't want to spend the money, or they can't spend the money. The \$350 is not something that you can necessarily just take out of a two-week paycheck and throw in another direction.”

In that same news story, Norah Hogan reported that firefighters are regularly exposed to at least 13 chemicals, including arsenic and sulfuric acid, which cause cancer. Norah also cited data from the American Cancer Society, which found that firefighters have a 9% higher risk for cancer – as

compared to the general population. That risk goes up for certain types of cancer, like non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and prostate cancer.

LD 784 would ensure that medical professionals consider the unique risk factors associated with the profession when recommending and conducting preventive screenings. It would also require that insurance companies cover the screenings.

The repeated exposure to traumatic events is a known factor in shortening the life expectancy of our first responders. These individuals face not only physical challenges but also significant mental and emotional burdens as they navigate the aftermath of emergencies. Certain preventive screenings and tests can measure the toll that repeated exposure to traumatic events takes on the personal health of first responders. There are specific indicators, lipids and markers that reveal health conditions.

Currently, preventive screenings necessary to catch the early onset of health impacts related to first responder risks are not engaged without a clear presenting factor unrelated to how the health effects in this population are present. For instance, most insurances do not cover negative screenings for cancer except in certain circumstances, while some have age-related triggers like mammograms or screenings for colon cancer.

These brave men and women put their health, lives, and personal safety on the line to keep our communities protected and safe. When a crisis, disaster or emergency strikes, we count on them. We cannot eliminate all the risks associated with these occupations, but we can take this step to help them afford screenings and tests to detect the potentially life-changing, life-threatening medical diagnoses that they are at a higher risk for. If we take this step, we can ensure that firefighters, first responders, and police officers live longer, healthier lives.

I thank the Committee for its time, and I would be happy to answer any questions.



**Donna Bailey**  
State Senator, Senate District 31  
*Buxton, Old Orchard Beach, and Saco*



# Health Screening Results

Maine State | February - March 2024 Aggregate Results





## UDS Health Screening Snapshot Maine State



**1052**

TOTAL ACTIONABLE FINDINGS  
(INCLUDING HIGH RISK, CARDIOVASCULAR)



**227**

HIGH-RISK FINDINGS



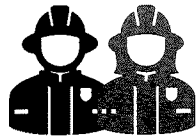
**263**

CARDIOVASCULAR FINDINGS



# Maine State

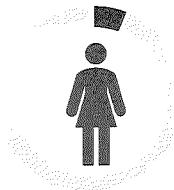
February-March 2024 Screening



**419** Participants

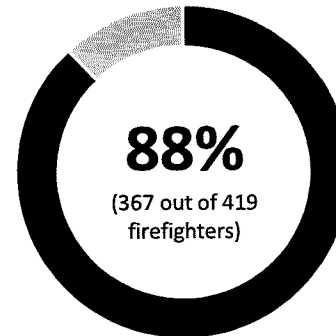


**94%**  
(392 males)



**6%**  
(27 females)

Percentage of  
firefighters with at  
least one actionable  
finding

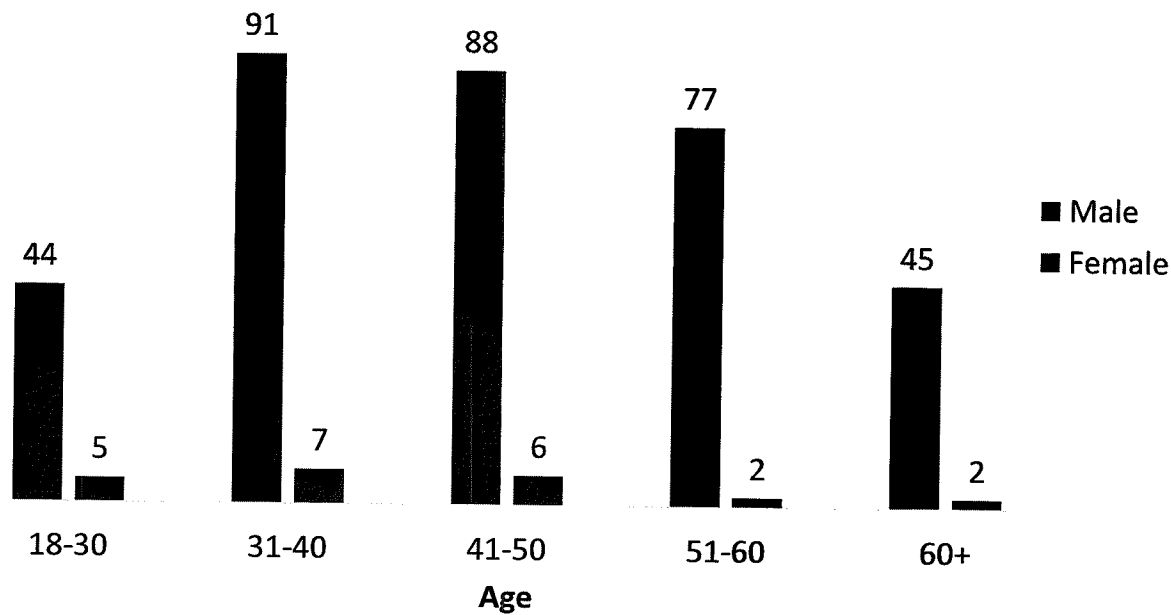


**88%**  
(367 out of 419  
firefighters)

**88%**

with at least one actionable finding

Number of Actionable Findings by Age and Gender



**1052** 🔍

Total Actionable Findings



**22%** ⚠️

of Actionable Findings are  
“High-Risk”  
(227 High-Risk Findings)

# Summary of Actionable Findings = High Risk Pathology

Maine State | Feb-March 2024 Screening

419 Total Participants

392  27 

## 227 High-Risk Findings

High-Risk Finding	Total #
<b>General Organs</b>	<b>87</b>
Testicles - Calcification/Microlithiasis (Multiple Calcified Spots)	30
Prostate - Heterogeneous and Enlarged (Abnormal texture and large in size)	27
Thyroid - Nodules - Solid >1cm High Risk	15
Prostate protruding into bladder (large prostate pushing against the bladder)	10
Testicles - Mass	2
Liver - Fatty, Enlarged w/ Mass	2
Kidney -Mass	1
<b>Cardiovascular</b>	<b>140</b>
Mitral Valve: Mild-Moderate Regurgitation	48
Aortic Valve: Trace to Mild Regurgitation	4
Aortic Valve: Mild to Moderate Regurgitation	15
Aortic Valve: Moderate Regurgitation	3
Aortic Valve: Moderate to Severe Regurgitation	1
Pulmonic Valve: Mild-Moderate Regurgitation	16
Tricuspid Valve: Mild-Moderate Regurgitation	22
Aortic Valve: Bicuspid	2
Aortic Valve: Sclerosis	5
Calcified Valve-Stenosis	19
Aortic Calcification Changes	4
Aorta - Dilated (Over 3 cm in size)	1

## 1052 Total Actionable Findings

Testicles	216 Total Findings
Hydrocele (Fluid around the testicle)	108
Epididymal Cyst	39
Calcification/Microlithiasis (Multiple Calcified Spots)	30
Scrotal Variocelles (Dilated Vessels Around Testicles)	13
Testicular Pearl	12
Cyst	11
Foci (Single calcified spot)	8
Mass	2
Heterogeneous/Irregular (Abnormal texture of testicle)	1
Irregular Size (compare the testicle sizes)	1
Heterogeneous Epididymis (Abnormal texture in appearance)	1
Complex Cyst	1
<b>Liver</b>	<b>179 Total Findings</b>
Fatty	118
Fatty Enlarged Liver Size	53
Cyst	4
Hemangioma (Benign Mass)	2
Fatty, Enlarged w/ Mass	2

Thyroid	143 Total Findings
Enlarged Heterogeneous/Bulky (Abnormal texture appearance and large in size)	43
Multiple Nodules - Cystic Cyst	23
Nodules - Solid <1 cm	17
Nodules - Solid >1cm High Risk	15
Nodules - Complex (Both solid and liquid components)	11
Nodules - Hypoechoic (Darker shadow)	10
Non-Identifiable Tissue/Absent (Thyroid tissue not seen)	1
<b>Kidneys</b>	<b>113 Total Findings</b>
Multiple Stones	58
Stone	21
Cyst	18
Dilation of Collection System (Hydronephrosis)	10
Multiple Cysts	3
Complex Cyst	2
Mass	1



# Summary of Actionable Findings (cont.)

Maine State | Feb-March 2024 Screening

419 Total Participants

392  27 

= High Risk Pathology

Prostate	53 Total Findings
Heterogeneous and Enlarged (Abnormal texture and large in size)	27
Calcifications	16
Prostate protruding into bladder (large prostate pushing against the bladder)	10

Spleen	40 Total Findings
Enlarged	39
Granulomas (bright spots-calcified)	1

Gallbladder	26 Total Findings
Multiple Gallstones	12
Gallstone	9
Polyps	4
Debris (Sludge)	1

Female Pelvic	7 Total Findings
Ovarian Cyst	4
Uterus Fibroid	3

Urinary Bladder	1 Total Finding
Debris (Internal floating particles)	1

Cardiac	135 Total Findings
Mitral Valve: Mild-Moderate Regurgitation	48
Aortic Valve: Trace to Mild Regurgitation	4
Aortic Valve: Mild to Moderate Regurgitation	15
Aortic Valve: Moderate Regurgitation	3
Aortic Valve: Moderate to Severe Regurgitation	1
Pulmonic Valve: Mild-Moderate Regurgitation	16
Tricuspid Valve: Mild-Moderate Regurgitation	22
Aortic Valve: Bicuspid	2
Aortic Valve: Sclerosis	5
Calcified Valve-Stenosis	19

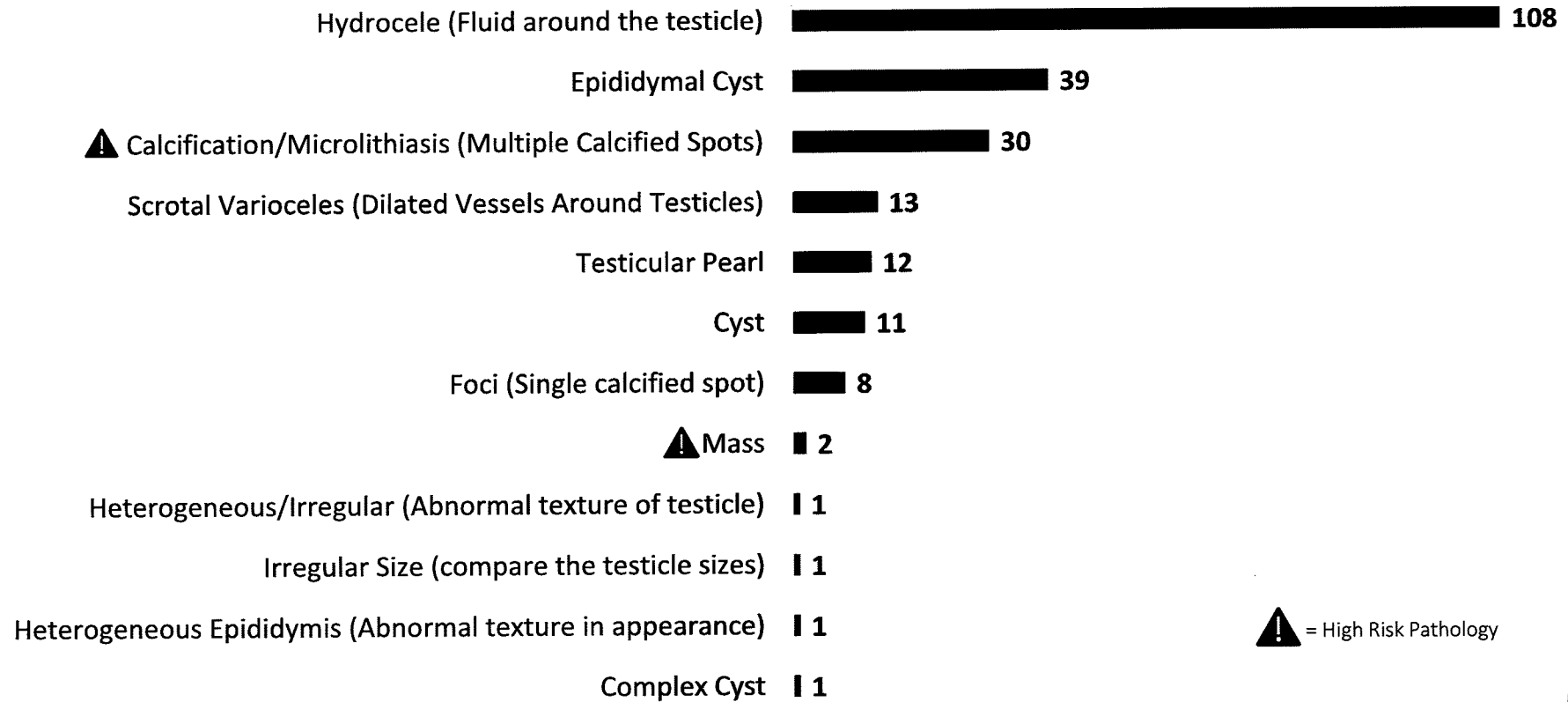
Carotid	123 Total Findings
Mild Plaque in Common Carotid Artery	44
Mild Plaque in the Internal Carotid Artery	41
Mild Plaque in Bulb	38

Abdominal Aorta	5 Total Findings
Aortic Calcification Changes	4
Dilated (Over 3 cm in size)	1



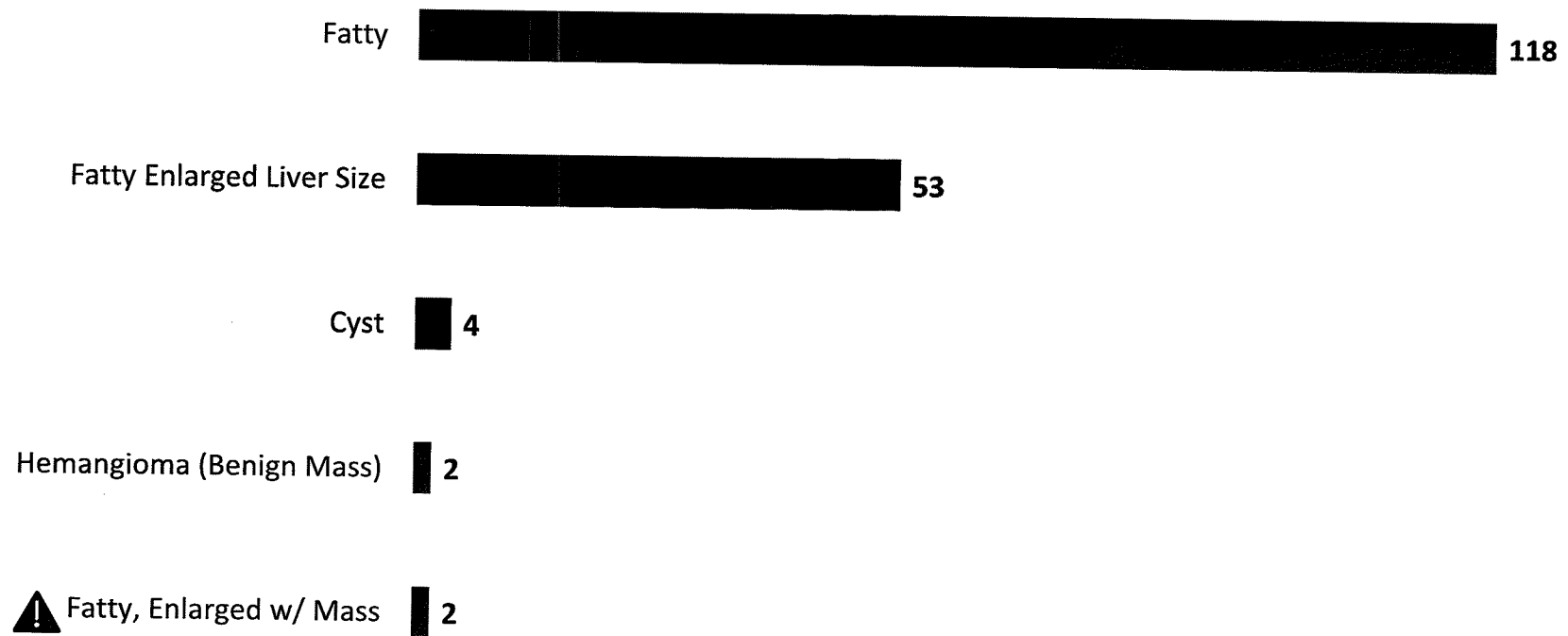


# Testicles | 227 Actionable Findings



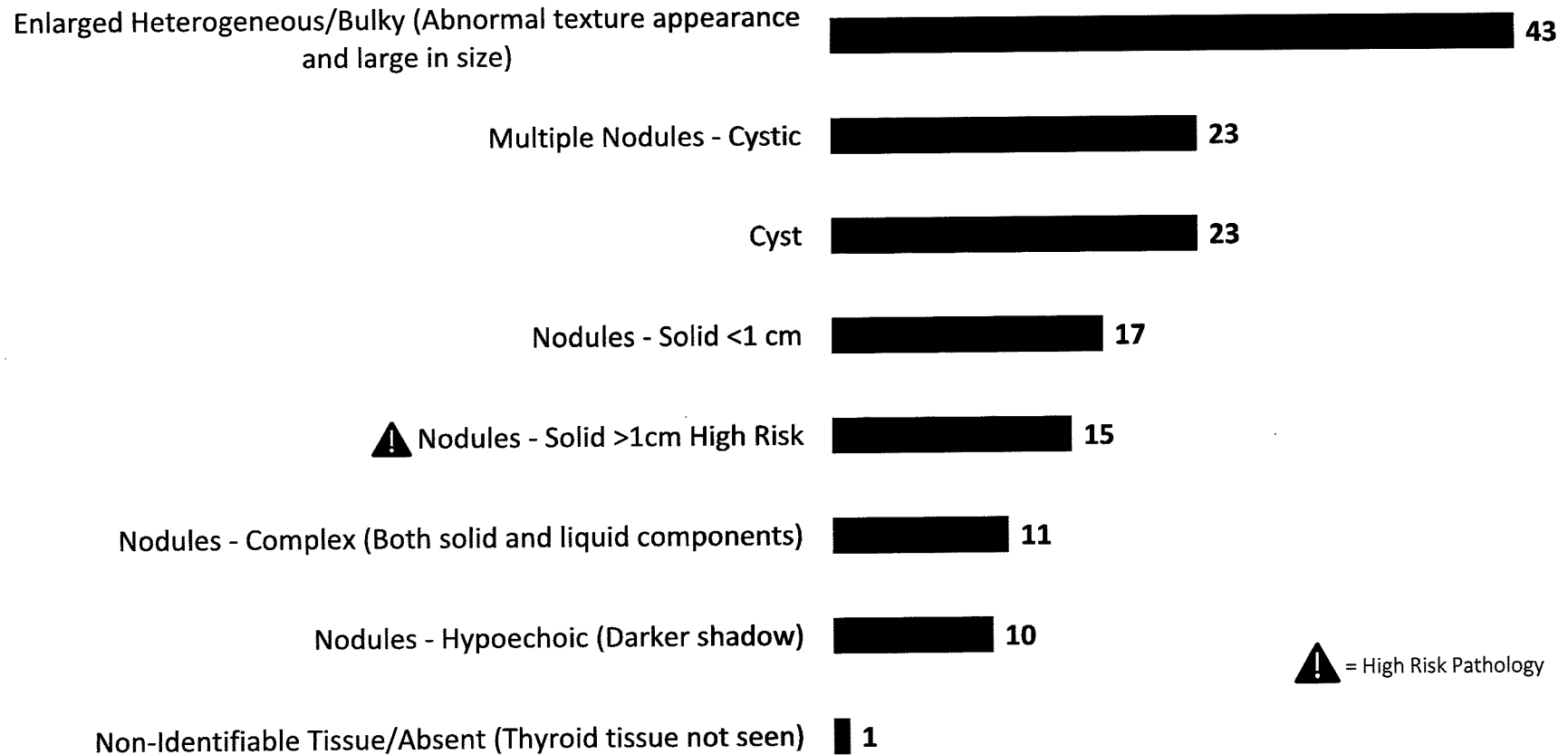
▲ = High Risk Pathology

# Liver | 179 Actionable Findings



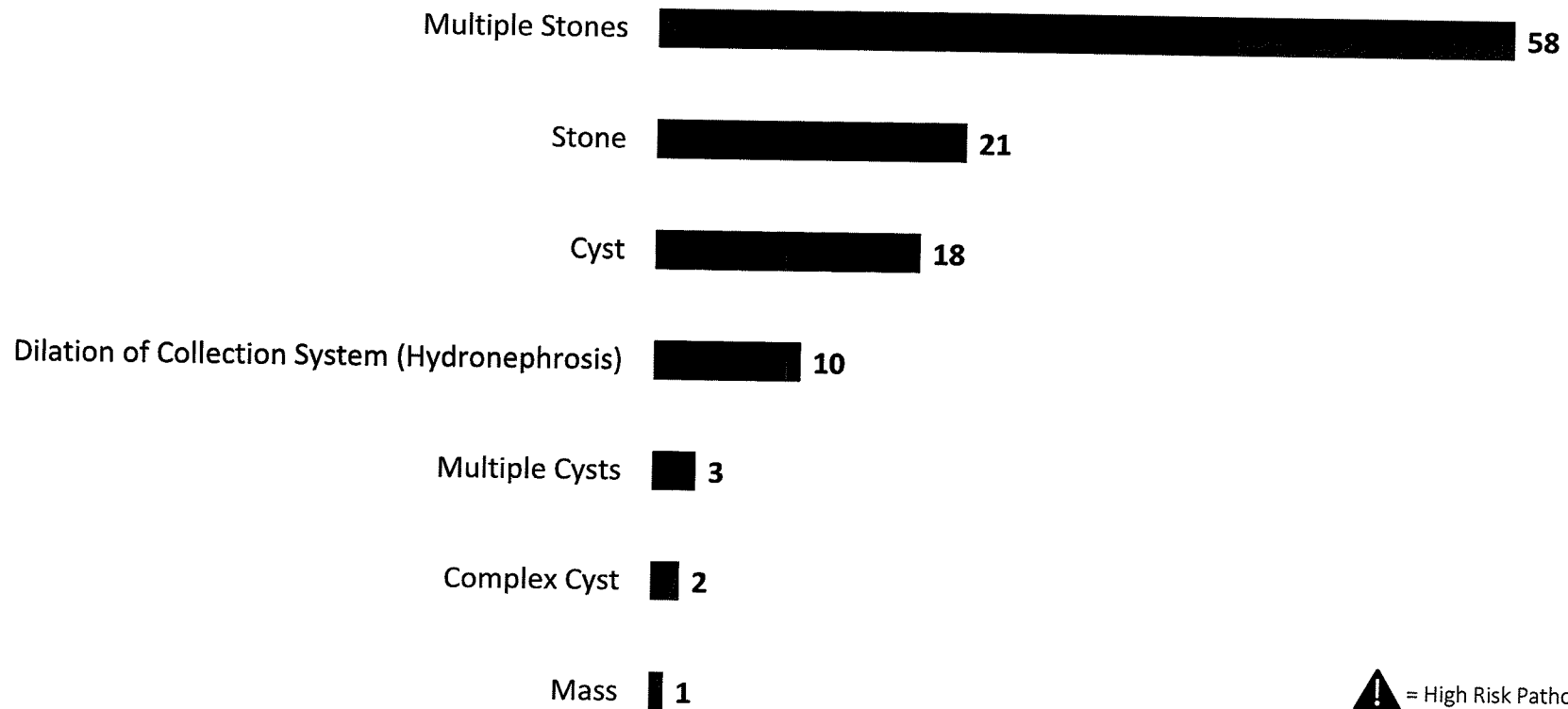
⚠ = High Risk Pathology


# Thyroid | 143 Actionable Findings



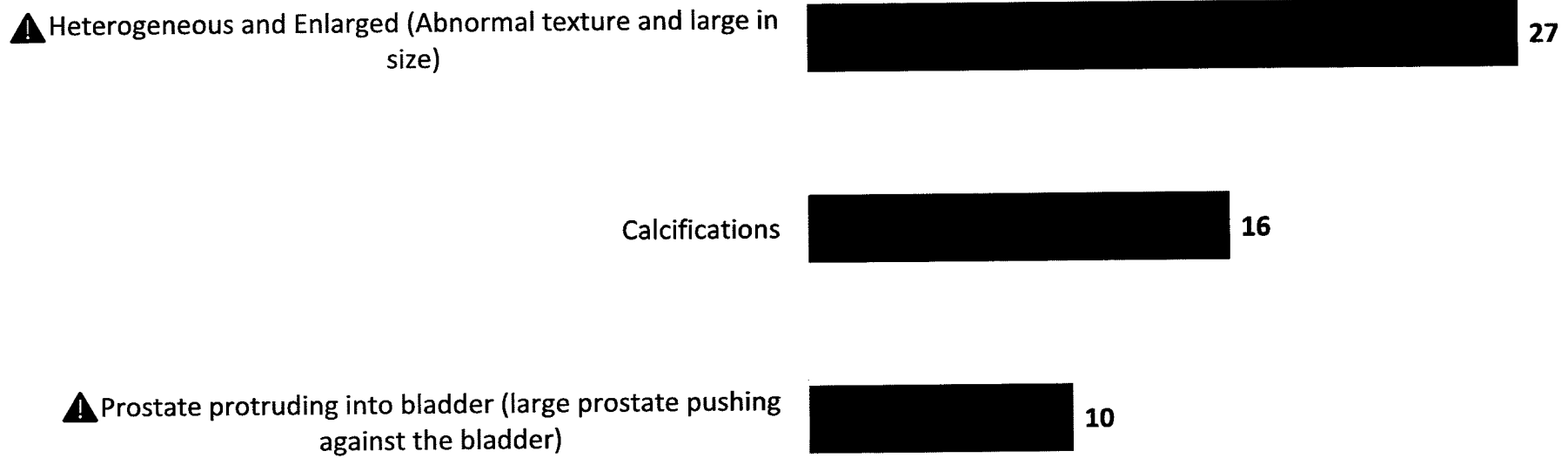
⚠ = High Risk Pathology

# Kidneys | 113 Actionable Findings



 = High Risk Pathology

# Prostate | 53 Actionable Findings



⚠️ = High Risk Pathology

# Spleen | 40 Actionable Findings

Enlarged




39

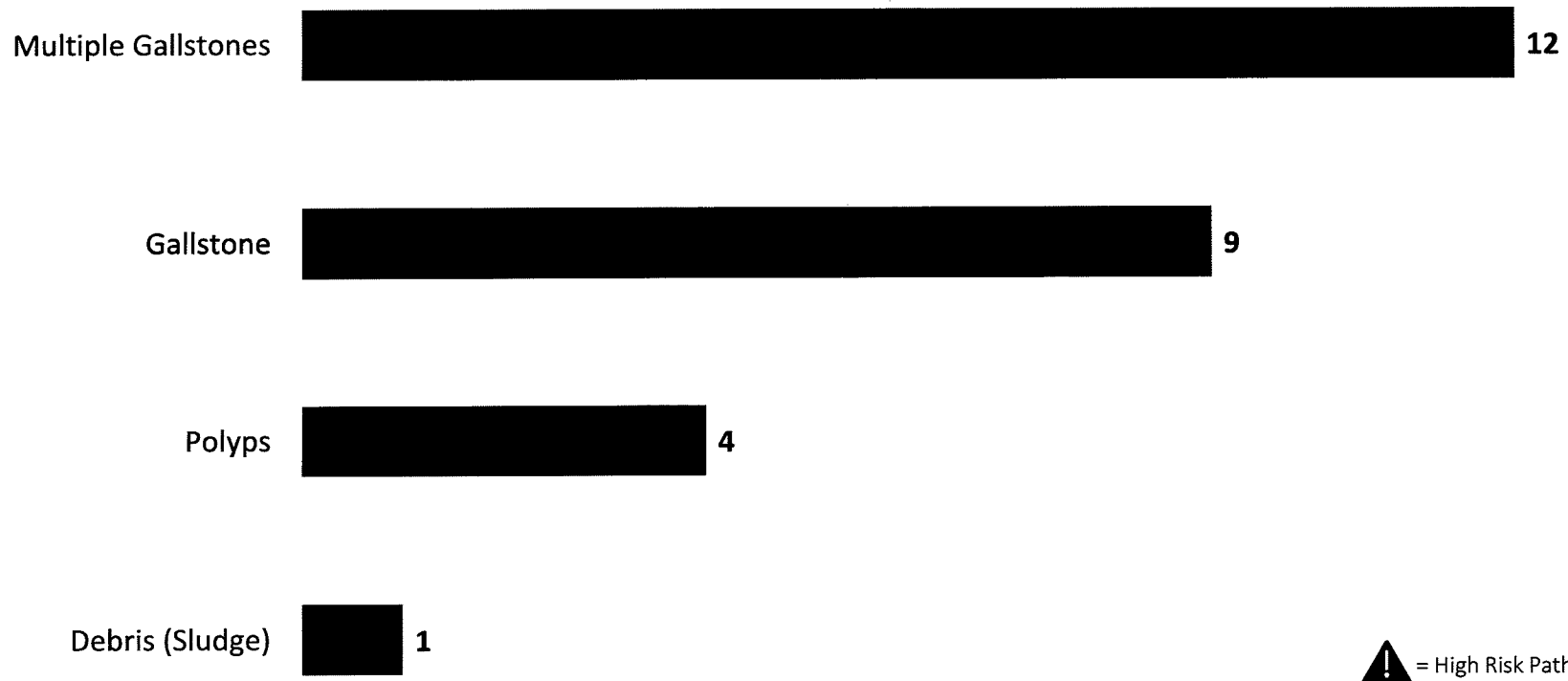
Granuloma (bright spots-calcified)




1

 = High Risk Pathology

# Gallbladder | 26 Actionable Findings



 = High Risk Pathology



## Female Pelvic | 7 Actionable Findings

Ovarian Cyst




4

Uterus Fibroid



3

 = High Risk Pathology



# Urinary Bladder | 1 Actionable Finding

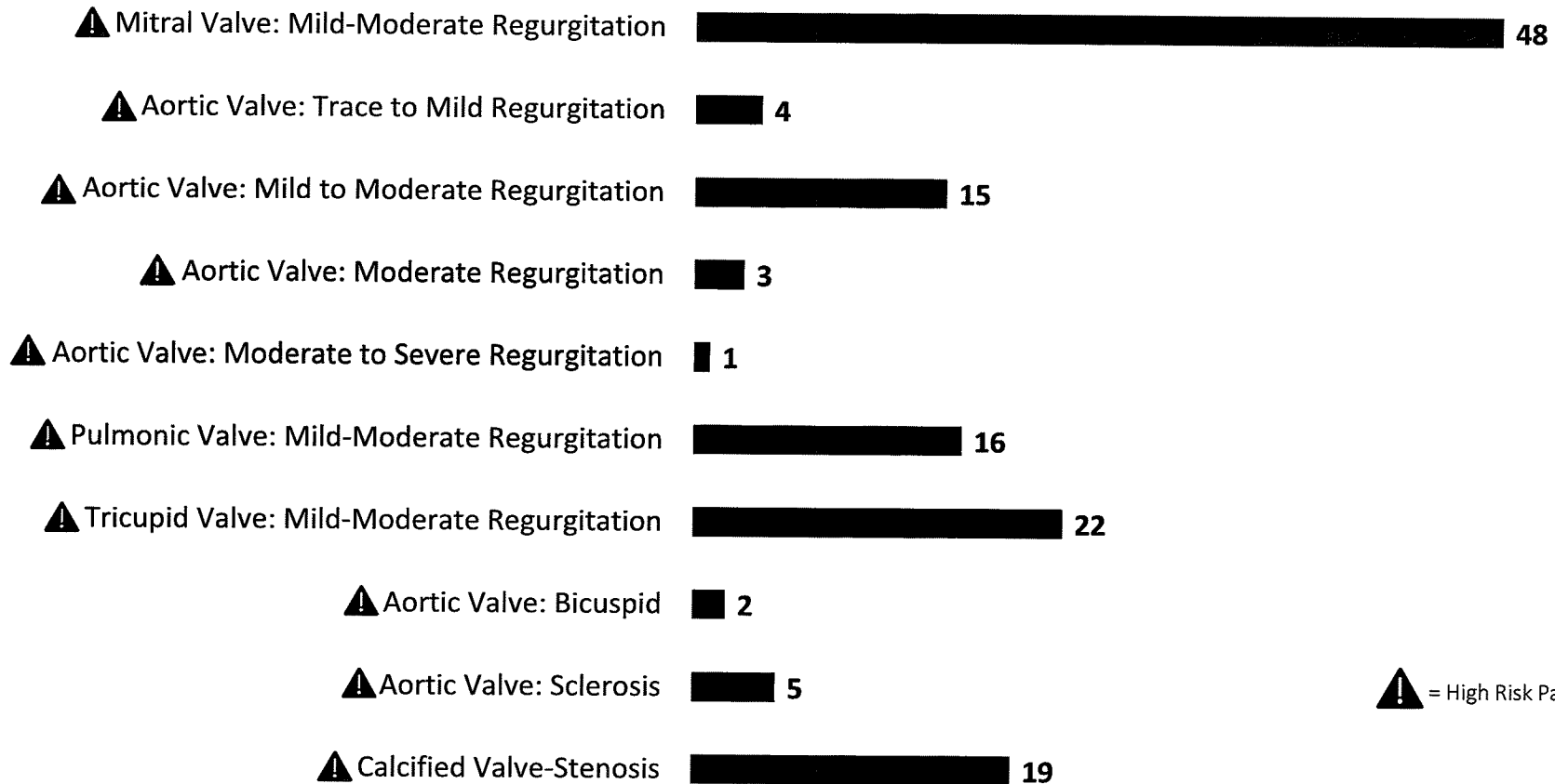
Debris (Internal floating particles)



1

 = High Risk Pathology


# Cardiac | 135 Actionable Findings




⚠️ = High Risk Pathology

# Carotid | 123 Actionable Findings




 = High Risk Pathology

# Abdominal Aorta | 5 Actionable Findings

 Aortic Calcification Changes



4

 Dilated (Over 3 cm in size)



1

 = High Risk Pathology



**Saving Lives  
Through *Prevention***