



April 3, 2025

Chair Black, Vice Chair McFaun, and Members of the House Committee on Health Care:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of S.27.

I'm writing in support of S.27 on behalf of ZERO Prostate Cancer, the leading national nonprofit with the mission to end prostate cancer and help all those who are impacted, and on behalf of the patients we represent.

According to Vermont's State Treasurer, around one in ten adults in Vermont have medical debt. Medical debt and income lost to illness has been linked to over 60% of bankruptcies in the US,<sup>1</sup> and half of cancer patients and survivors have had medical debt related to their cancer, according to a 2024 American Cancer Society survey.<sup>3</sup> Patients with cancer-related medical debt are three times more likely to be behind on screenings, and the impacts of medical debt are disproportionately borne by those at-risk for prostate cancer.<sup>2</sup>

ZERO Prostate Cancer supports the passage of S.27, which would give needed medical debt relief to patients. Please follow up with [georgia@zerocancer.org](mailto:georgia@zerocancer.org) with any questions.

Respectfully,  
Georgia Bates  
State Government Relations & Advocacy Manager, ZERO Prostate Cancer

1 Rakshit, S., Rae, M., Claxton, G., Amin, K., & Cox, C. (2024, February 12). The burden of medical debt in the United States.

<https://www.healthsystemtracker.org/brief/the-burden-of-medical-debt-in-the-united-states/#Share%20of%20adults%20who%20have%20medical%20debt,%20by%20health%20status%20and%20disability%20status,%202021>

2 Himmelstein DU, Thorne D, Warren E, Woolhandler S. Medical bankruptcy in the United States, 2007: results of a national study. *Am J Med* 2009;122(8):741–746. Crossref, Medline, Google Scholar

3 Survivor Views survey conducted March 18 – April 14, 2024 among 1,284 cancer patients and survivors