

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-2802**

November 18, 2009

Ned Calonge, M.D., M.P.H.  
Chair, U.S. Preventive Services Task Force  
540 Gaither Road  
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Dr. Calonge,

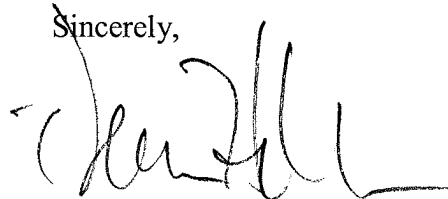
As someone whose family has been touched by breast cancer, I write to express my concern over the U.S. Preventative Services Task Force's recent recommendations concerning mammograms.

In this year alone, an estimated 193,000 new cases of breast cancer will be diagnosed in America. The disease will claim some 41,000 lives in our nation. The key to surviving breast cancer is early detection. Numerous organizations that have advocated for breast cancer patients and survivors have expressed concerns that the new recommendations by the Task Force may confuse Americans just as the education and awareness efforts undertaken in recent decades have finally helped turn the tide against this horrible disease.

While screening via mammography is not perfect, this technology has proven to be one of the best means we have of detecting breast cancer in treatable stages. Women should be made aware of the potential effects of a mammogram, and under no circumstances should a patient be discouraged or prevented from receiving a mammogram if she and her doctor believe it to be necessary. As the Task Force proceeds in this matter, I strongly encourage you to make every effort to ensure the new mammogram guidelines are not interpreted in a way that will prevent any woman from receiving needed care. I also hope that public statements by the Task Force will also continue to remind women of the importance of self-examination, knowledge of family history, and other important factors in the fight against breast cancer.

I look forward to working with you in ensuring that all American women receive the best possible care.

Sincerely,



DEAN HELLER  
Member of Congress