



METAVIVOR

Metastatic Breast Cancer Research, Support and Awareness

Groundswell State Captain Training

February 2026



THE
FEDERAL GROUP, INC.

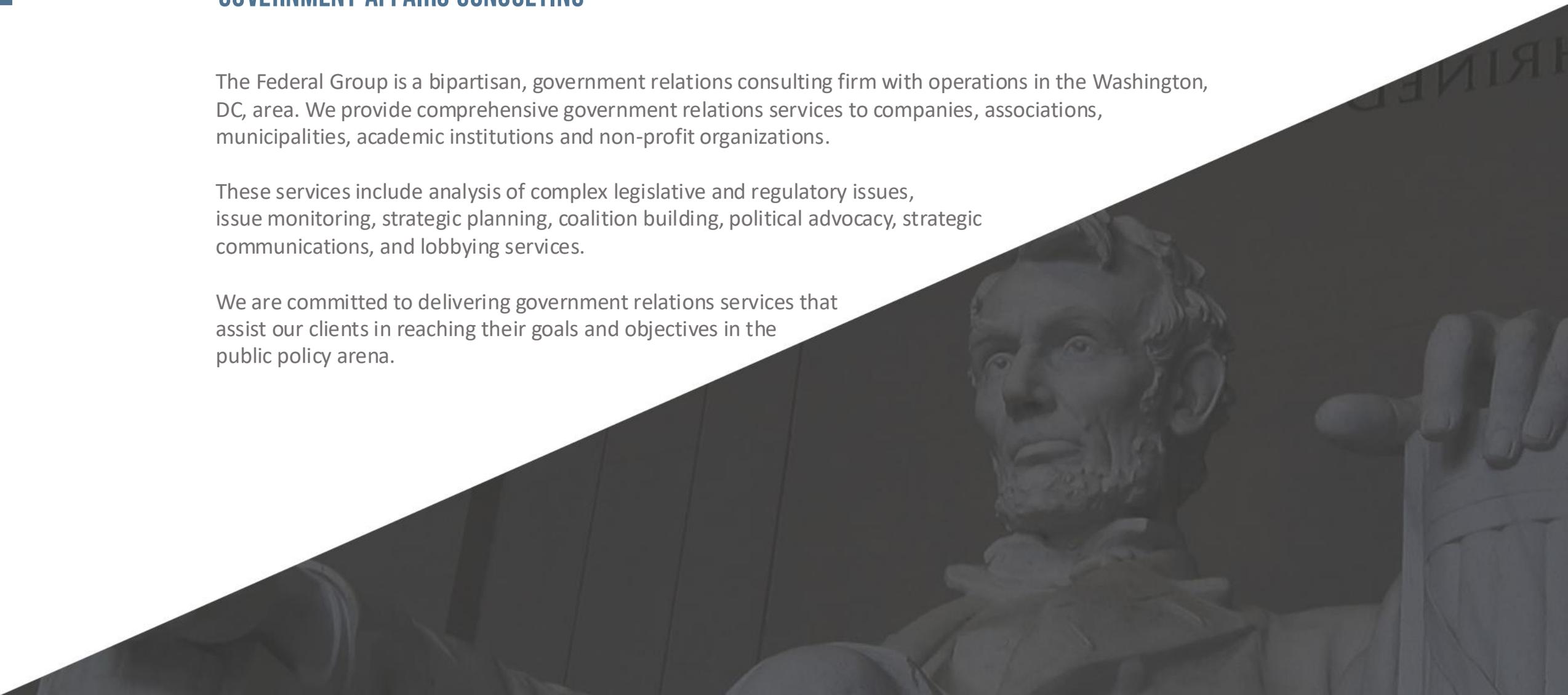
THE FEDERAL GROUP

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS CONSULTING

The Federal Group is a bipartisan, government relations consulting firm with operations in the Washington, DC, area. We provide comprehensive government relations services to companies, associations, municipalities, academic institutions and non-profit organizations.

These services include analysis of complex legislative and regulatory issues, issue monitoring, strategic planning, coalition building, political advocacy, strategic communications, and lobbying services.

We are committed to delivering government relations services that assist our clients in reaching their goals and objectives in the public policy arena.



MEET THE TEAM



Patrick Cooney - Founder and President

Patrick founded The Federal Group, Inc. in 1999 with a focus on impacting health care policy. His experience working with Congress for more than 30-years provides clients unique insight into the federal health policy landscape and unparalleled access to decision makers.



Taylor Thomas - Director of Government Relations

Taylor Thomas is a seasoned professional with a diverse background in health care. She has experience representing clients across a range of healthcare issue areas, including aging, disability, and rare disease. Prior to joining The Federal Group, she served as a Senior Researcher in the Department of Health Policy and Management at The George Washington University and as a Senior Project Manager at MagView, a mammography information system software company.



Michelle Artz, Vice President

Michelle brings a wealth of diverse experience in government affairs and advocacy. Prior to joining the firm, she served as the Director of Government Affairs for the American Nurses Association (ANA). She also spent two and a half years working in Alliance Development at the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers Association (PhRMA).

GROUNDSWELL SUMMIT

METAvivor State Captain Training Agenda:

- Overview of GroundSwell Virtual Hill Day structure and timeline
- Your roll as State Captain
- How to facilitate group discussions around meeting roles
- Best practices for coordinating meetings with advocates with varying availability
- How to track which congressional offices the group is meeting with
- Follow-up form and email expectations after meetings

GROUNDSWELL 2026

FEBRUARY 23 - MARCH 6

GROUNDSWELL 2026 STRUCTURE AND TIMELINE

- GroundSwell is a two-week virtual lobbying event, designed to ensure that all METAvivor advocates have a supported opportunity to connect with their elected officials, without the barrier of travel to Washington, DC.
- METAvivor provides advocates with trainings, fact sheets and draft talking points and follow-up templates to support successful meetings.
- State Captains act as the primary point of contact for advocates in their group and take the lead on setting up meetings with Senators.

STATE CAPTAIN ROLE OVERVIEW

State Captains serve as facilitators, connectors, and points of coordination for their assigned advocate groups. Their role is to help advocates communicate with one another, self-organize for meetings, and ensure consistent follow-through before and after the Virtual Hill Day.

Key responsibilities:

- Act as the primary point of contact and communication lead for advocates in their group.
- Introduce themselves to the group prior to Hill Day and maintain open communication with advocates throughout the process
- Schedule Senate office meetings for your state delegation
- Serve as a resource for group coordination questions

MEETING SCHEDULING

- Event Timeline:
 - The two-week GroundSwell virtual meeting timeline is flexible--don't turn down a chance to meet if it's after March 6. The meeting, not the timing, is what's most important!
 - Be flexible with dates/times and expect to meet with staff and not the Member, this is common, especially for virtual meetings.
- Who schedules the meetings?
 - State Captains will set meetings with Senate offices for their group.
 - Individual advocates will set up meetings with their Congressional offices. State Captains help them coordinate with advocates that share that congressional district.

MEETING SCHEDULING (CONT'D)

- Scheduling Information we provide:
 - Contact information for Congressional staff
 - Meeting request email template
 - Contact information for GroundSwell participants in your state
- Getting in touch with offices:
 - Staff turnover is common; staff we shared may have left, or issues assignments may have changed. If this is the case, don't worry! Just ask for meet with a staff member who handles health care issues.
- Staffers typically expect the advocate to send a meeting invite with the virtual link (Zoom, Teams, Google Meet...)
 - Please let us know if you or advocates in your groups have any issues with this or need assistance. We are here to help!

CONGRESSIONAL MEETING COORDINATION

To avoid duplication and ensure coverage, State Captains maintain awareness of which offices their group is meeting with, and support advocates in coordinating meeting with shared offices.

State Captain Responsibilities include:

- Collecting information from advocates on which offices they plan to meet with as a whole group, smaller group, or individually
- Keeping a simple list of offices the group is meeting with (we will supply you with a spreadsheet).

STATE CAPTAIN TRACKER

State		(Form is also linked before)							
Follow-up form: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HFWGJSF									

Name	Role	Phone Number (if applicable)	Email	House Representative	House Staffer Information	Senator 1	Senator 1 Staffer Information	Senator 2	Senator 2 Staffer Information
Taylor Turner	State Captain	240-xxx-xxx	taylor@federalgrp.com	Glenn Ivey (D-MD-4)	Maisie.Ruddy@mail.house.gov	Angela Alsobrooks	ateshi_bhatt@alsobrooks.senate.gov	Chris Van Hollen	ornella_musinguzi@vanhollen.senate.gov
Michelle Artz	Advocate	301-xxx-xxxx	michell@federalgrp.com						
Alpha Lillstrom Cheng	Advocate	202-xxx-xxxx							
Crystal Moore	Advocate	202-xxx-xxxx							
Wang Shein	Advocate	209-xxx-xxxx							

House of Representatives: Metastatic Breast Cancer Access to Care Act	https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/2048	Note: If your member if listed here, that means they are already co-sponsoring the bill. If they are no listed here, they are not co-sponsoring the bill							
Senate: Metastatic Breast Cancer Access to Care Act	https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/senate-bill/3442/cosponsors								
Oral Drug Parity	https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/4101/cosponsors								

Group Meetings									
Office	Staffer	Staffer Email	Request Sent	Meeting Date and Time	Who is Attending Meeting	Follow-Up Form Filled Out (After meeting)	Follow-up Email Sent (After meeting)		
Angela Alsobrooks	Ateshi Bhatt	ateshi_bhatt@alsobrooks.senate.gov	Yes	2/24/2026 at 1pm EST	Taylor, Michelle, Alpha, Crystal, Wang	Yes	Yes		

MEETING REQUEST TEMPLATE



GroundSwell Meeting Request Template

Subject Line: Virtual Meeting Request: METAvivor GroundSwell Advocacy Event

Dear [Staffer's Name],

Hope you're doing well. I am a [metastatic breast cancer patient / family member of someone living with metastatic breast cancer] from [City/State]. I am an advocate with METAvivor, an organization dedicated to supporting and advocating for the metastatic breast cancer community.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you or a member of your team to share why urgent policy changes are needed to improve access to treatment for those of us living with metastatic breast cancer.

Would you be available to meet with us virtually during one of the following time slots?

- [List Days and Times you are available] **NOTE: Be sure to mention the timezone you are referencing. If you are meeting with the DC office, they operate on EST.**

Please let me know if any of these times work for you. I look forward to connecting.

Best,
[Insert Name]

CHECKING IF YOUR MEMBER IS COSPONSORING A BILL

Legislation

Home > Legislation > 119th Congress > H.R. 2048

Citation Subscribe Share/Save Site Feedback

H.R.2048 - Metastatic Breast Cancer Access to Care Act

119th Congress (2025-2026) | [Cancel Alerts](#) | [Edit Alerts](#)

BILL [Hide Overview](#)

Sponsor: [Rep. Garbarino, Andrew R. \[R-NY-2\]](#) (Introduced 03/11/2025)

Committees: House - Ways and Means

Latest Action: House - 03/11/2025 Referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means. ([All Actions](#))

Tracker: Introduced Passed House Passed Senate To President Became Law

More on This Bill
[Constitutional Authority Statements](#)
[CBO Cost Estimates \(0\)](#)

Subject — Policy Area:
Social Welfare

Give Feedback on This Bill
[Contact Your Member](#)

- Summary (1)
- Text (1)
- Actions (2)
- Titles (2)
- Amendments (0)
- Cosponsors (207)**
- Committees (1)
- Related Bills (0)

Cosponsors: H.R.2048 — 119th Congress (2025-2026)

[All Information](#) (Except Text)

Sponsor: [Rep. Garbarino, Andrew R. \[R-NY-2\]](#) | Cosponsor statistics: 207 current - includes 3 original

* = Original cosponsor

View

Sort by

Party of Cosponsor	Cosponsor	Date Cosponsored
<input type="checkbox"/> Democratic [150]	Rep. Castor, Kathy [D-FL-14]*	03/11/2025
<input type="checkbox"/> Republican [57]	Rep. Fitzpatrick, Brian K. [R-PA-1]*	03/11/2025
Cosponsors by U.S. State or Territory	Rep. Chu, Judy [D-CA-28]*	03/11/2025
California [31]	Rep. Feenstra, Randy [R-IA-4]	04/30/2025
New York [22]		

FACILITATING ROLE CONVERSATIONS

State Captains help guide group conversations so advocates can determine roles they are comfortable taking during meetings.

This includes convening discussions in advance of meetings to establish:

- Who will open the meeting and introduce the group
- Which advocates have personal stories aligned to specific talking points
- Who will deliver the policy ask
- Who will close the meeting

TIPS FOR GROUP VIRTUAL MEETINGS

- Keep introductions brief (all participants share where they are from and their connection to the district)
- Have your camera on, but mute your sound until it is your turn to talk.
- Share personal stories that connect to the policy "asks"
 - If possible, have 1 story for each "ask". Offices want to know how supporting these policy asks will help patients with MBC
- Stay respectful, concise, and focused on your key "asks"
- Leave 5 minutes at the end of the meeting to ask the staffer if they have any questions, and restate the policy request

We have created a script/talking points to help guide your discussions.

POST MEETING FOLLOW UP

After meetings:

- Complete the follow-up form for meetings attended
- Send follow-up email to offices after meeting
- Check in with advocates who held individual meetings to confirm the thank you email was sent and the follow-up form has been submitted.
- Flag any urgent follow-up needs, questions, or notable outcomes to the consulting team

POST MEETING FOLLOW UP



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Metastatic Breast Cancer | Research | Advocacy | Support

GroundSwell Meeting Follow-Up

* 1. What is your name?

* 2. What is your email?

* 3. Name of lawmaker office visited:

* 4. Who did you meet with?

Member of Congress / Senator

Staff

* 5. Name(s) of congressional staff attendees:

* 6. How supportive/positive was the conversation on a scale of 0-5 with 0 representing opposition and 5 representing full support?

	0	1	2	3	4	5
MBC Access to Care	<input type="radio"/>					
Cancer Drug Parity Act	<input type="radio"/>					
SEER/Data Modernization	<input type="radio"/>					
Research Funding	<input type="radio"/>					

7. Is any follow-up required by METAvivor Advocacy staff? If so, please share what information was requested and to whom staff should send a response.

8. Was there a Breast Cancer/MBC connection in the office?

9. Please note any other issues or questions that arose during your meeting that you feel are important.

10. Please share any other context, observations, or personal reflections you think METAvivor staff should know.

Done

POST MEETING FOLLOW UP EMAIL

GroundSwell Email Templates: Follow-up From Virtual Hill Meetings

Subject: Thank You for meeting during METAvivor Virtual Hill Day

Dear [Staffer's Name],

Thank you again for meeting with me during METAvivor's GroundSwell Advocacy Event. It meant a lot to me to have the chance to share my personal experiences with metastatic breast cancer (MBC) and talk about the urgent policy changes that would make a real difference in my life and in the lives of so many others across the country.

As we discussed, MBC is stage IV breast cancer. It is treatable but not curable. Patients like me often face barriers to timely, affordable, and effective care. That's why I am asking for your office's support by:

- **HOUSE: Cosponsoring the Metastatic Breast Cancer Access to Care Act (H.R. 2048/S. 3442):** Join the over 200 bipartisan House members who have cosponsored the bill to eliminate the 5-month SSDI and 24-month Medicare waiting periods for people diagnosed with MBC.
If your member is already a sponsor, thank them instead!
- **HOUSE: Cosponsoring the Cancer Drug Parity Act (H.R. 4101)** to ensure that out-of-pocket costs for oral cancer medications are no higher than for IV therapies.
If your member is already a sponsor, thank them instead!
- **SENATE: Cosponsoring the Metastatic Breast Cancer Access to Care Act (H.R. 2048/S. 3442)** to eliminate the 5-month SSDI and 24-month Medicare waiting periods for people diagnosed with MBC.
If your member is already a sponsor, thank them instead!
- **SENATE: Supporting the reintroduction of the Cancer Drug Parity Act (H.R. 4101)** to ensure that out-of-pocket costs for oral cancer medications are no higher than for IV therapies.
- **HOUSE AND SENATE Improving MBC Cancer Data (SEER Registry):** Expanding funding and accuracy to ensure people with MBC are fully counted and represented.
- **HOUSE AND SENATE: Increasing MBC Research Funding:** Supporting federal funding in metastatic breast cancer research, including funding for NIH, ARPA-H, and the Department of Defense Peer-Reviewed Breast Cancer Research Program, to improve both the length and quality of life for patients and accelerate life-saving advancements for the MBC community.

I hope [Member] will consider these legislative changes which will directly impact patients and families like mine across the country. Our lives depend on timely access to treatment and new research. Every day counts. Thank you again for your time. I look forward to staying in touch and serving as a resource as your office continues to consider these issues

Warm regards,

[Your Name]

RESOURCE KIT

Materials shared include:

- State Captain role overview and GroundSwell Checklist
- Group assignments with advocate contact information
- Assigned House and Senate offices (based on advocate representation)
- Email template for State Captains to introduce themselves to their group
- Link to recording of advocacy training held 2/5/26
- Core talking points and policy asks
- Guidance on facilitating role conversations
- Office-tracking template (office name only)
- Template for meeting follow up emails
- Link to the post-meeting follow-up form

GROUNDSWELL STATE CAPTAIN CHECKLIST

State Captain Checklist for Virtual Hill Day

Before State Captain Training

- Review the State Captain prep email, including:
 - State Captain role overview
 - Group assignment and advocate contact information
 - Advocates' House and Senate offices
 - Talking points and policy ask (for familiarity)

State Captain Training

- Attend state captain training on **February 10, 2026** at 1pm EST

After State Captain Training / Pre-Hill Day

- Send introductory email to your group using the provided template
- Connect with advocates to confirm participation
- Facilitate a group conversation to coordinate meeting roles. **Example:**
 - Opening the meeting / introductions
 - Personal stories aligned to talking points
 - Policy ask
 - Closing the meeting
- Confirm which congressional offices group members plan to meet with
- Maintain a simple list of offices with are meeting with to avoid duplication

During Virtual Hill Day

- Serve as point of contact for your group
- Support advocates with group coordination questions as needed
- Keep list of group meetings occurring with Congressional offices in provided Google sheet template

After Hill Meetings

- Complete the follow-up form for meetings you attended
- Check in with advocates who held individual meetings to confirm follow-up form submission
- Flag any urgent follow-up needs, questions, or notable feedback from offices to the consulting team to METAvivor advocacy team

OTHER MATERIALS PROVIDED



Metastatic Breast Cancer Access to Care Act (H.R. 2048/S. 3442)

REQUEST

METAvivor urges members of Congress to co-sponsor and support the bipartisan Metastatic Breast Cancer Access to Care Act (H.R. 2048/S.3442).

WHY WE'RE HERE

Metastatic breast cancer (MBC) is stage IV breast cancer where the tumors have spread beyond the breast to other parts of the body. While treatable, it is not curable. People with MBC face unique challenges in accessing timely, affordable, and effective treatment.

- An estimated 168,000 women in the U.S. are currently living with MBC, and 2,800 men will be diagnosed with breast cancer in 2025.
- 42,170 women and 510 men will die from MBC this year.
- About 1 in 4 patients with early-stage breast cancer will develop MBC
- Only 32% of people diagnosed with MBC live longer than 5 years.

BACKGROUND

The Metastatic Breast Cancer Access to Care Act would eliminate arbitrary waiting periods for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits and Medicare coverage for those with metastatic breast cancer.

METAvivor is a volunteer-driven, non-profit organization that funds vital research to help improve the longevity and quality of life for MBC patients. As passionately committed patients ourselves, we rally public attention to the urgent needs of the MBC community, help patients find strength through support and purpose, and make every dollar count as we work with and fund researchers seeking to extend and improve the quality of care for MBC patients.

Under current law, there is a five month waiting period between when a person with MBC applies for Social Security Disability benefits and when they begin receiving those payments.

Also, that person must then wait an additional 24 months after disability benefits begin before they are able to receive Medicare insurance coverage.

This delay creates obvious hardships for people with metastatic breast cancer as they struggle to navigate care and pay medical expenses.

Because Stage IV MBC patients live, on average, 18-36 months after diagnosis, this delay also means many people with MBC may not live long enough to receive benefits from the system they have paid into and for which they are fully eligible. Only 32% of women and 19% of men survive 5 years post-diagnosis.

Nearly 30,000 Americans die annually waiting for Social Security Disability Insurance and Medicare benefits.

We urge you to support the Metastatic Breast Cancer Access to Care Act (H.R. 2048/S.3442) to ensure that Americans living with MBC can access the disability and Medicare benefits they have earned without delays that too often surpass their lives.

Fact Sheets



GroundSwell Hill Day Meeting Talking Points

1. Introduction (METAvivor Advocate)

"Hi, my name is [Name], and I'm a [metastatic breast cancer patient / family member of someone living with MBC] from [City/State]."

"I'm here today with METAvivor, an organization dedicated to supporting and advocating for the MBC community. I want to share why urgent policy changes are needed to improve access to treatment for those of us living with this disease."

2. Why We're Here (Advocate Talking Points)

"Metastatic breast cancer is stage IV breast cancer that has spread from the breast to other parts of the body. While treatable, it is not curable. People with MBC face unique challenges in accessing timely, affordable, and effective treatment."

- An estimated 168,000 women in the U.S. are currently living with metastatic breast cancer. (Source: [Metastatic Breast Cancer Explained: Symptoms, Diagnosis & More](#))
- This year, 42,170 women will die from metastatic breast cancer, that is 115 women per day. (Sources: [Stop the Clock! - National Breast Cancer Coalition](#))
- This year, approximately 2,800 men will be diagnosed with breast cancer and approximately 510 men will die from the disease. (Sources: [American Cancer Society](#) and [National Breast Cancer Coalition \(Stop The Clock\)](#).)
- Approximately 85% of those diagnosed with MBC previously had an early-stage breast cancer diagnosis. (Source: [Metastatic Breast Cancer Explained: Symptoms, Diagnosis & More](#))
- Nearly 30% of women initially diagnosed with early-stage breast cancer will ultimately develop metastatic disease, although most early-stage patients do not progress to MBC. (Source: [Metastatic Breast Cancer Explained: Symptoms, Diagnosis & More](#))

"We're here today to talk about four key federal policy issues that directly impact the lives of people with MBC across the country:"

- **The Metastatic Breast Cancer Access to Care Act (H.R.2048/S.3442, seeking reintroduction in the Senate):**
"This bipartisan bill would waive the 5-month waiting period for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and the 24-month waiting period for Medicare for people

Talking Points

YOUR LEADERSHIP, WITH OUR SUPPORT

Thank you for your interest in being a State Captain!

METAvivor board members and the Federal Group are here to support you every step of the way. For any questions and issues that may come up in preparation for or during GroundSwell, please contact us:

The Federal Group

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QUESTIONS

