

Association Of Black Cardiologists Applauds Illinois Legislation Requiring Insurance Coverage For Peripheral Artery Disease Screening



NEWS PROVIDED BY
Association of Black Cardiologists →
May 14, 2025, 15:07 ET

WASHINGTON, May 14, 2025 /PRNewswire/ -- The Association of Black Cardiologists (ABC) strongly commends the Illinois State Legislature and Senator Napoleon Harris III for advancing critical legislation that would require insurance companies to cover medically necessary peripheral artery disease (PAD) screenings for individuals at risk. The bill, championed in the House by State Representative Thaddeus Jones (D-South Holland), passed the House Insurance Committee unanimously and will now move to the full House for consideration.

This landmark legislation marks a vital step in addressing longstanding cardiovascular health disparities, especially among Black Americans, who face a significantly higher risk of developing PAD. Studies show nearly one in three Black adults will develop PAD, compared to approximately one in five Hispanic or white adults.

"Early detection of PAD can be life-saving and limb-saving," said Dr. Anthony Fletcher, President of the ABC. "By ensuring insurance coverage for these critical screenings, Illinois is taking a bold step toward reducing health disparities and preventing thousands of unnecessary amputations. This legislation aligns perfectly with ABC's ongoing mission to eliminate cardiovascular disparities in all people of color."

Dr. Foluso Fakorede, a nationally recognized PAD advocate and co-chair of the ABC PAD Initiative, emphasized the transformative potential of this legislation: "This bill represents a crucial turning point in our fight against the amputation epidemic that has disproportionately affected Black and underserved communities for far too long. Increasing access to early PAD screening will help identify this deadly disease before it progresses to limb loss, saving not only limbs but lives. I've seen firsthand how early intervention can dramatically change outcomes, and this legislation is a model that should be replicated nationwide."

The ABC has collaborated closely with the American College of Cardiology (ACC) Illinois Chapter in advocating for this initiative, providing expert testimony and data to underscore the urgent need for improved access to PAD screening.

"The ACC Illinois Chapter is proud to partner with the ABC to support this life-saving policy," said Dr. Benjamin H. Freed, Governor of the ACC Illinois Chapter. "Together, our organizations are committed to ensuring equitable access to cardiovascular care through informed, evidence-based legislation like this."

This collaborative effort demonstrates the power of medical societies working together to improve patient outcomes through evidence-based policy initiatives.

Peripheral artery disease affects an estimated 18 to 21 million Americans and occurs when arteries supplying blood to the limbs become narrowed or blocked by plaque buildup. PAD screening is simple and non-invasive, typically involving ankle-brachial index (ABI) testing, which compares blood pressure in the ankle and arm.

The legislation mandates insurance coverage for PAD screening for individuals over age 65 and for younger individuals with risk factors such as smoking history, heart disease, diabetes, or other indicators. Without early detection and treatment, PAD can lead to severe complications, including amputation. The five-year survival rate following major amputation can be as low as 20%.

The ABC's PAD Initiative, launched in 2018, specifically addresses the underdiagnosis and undertreatment of PAD in Black communities. The ABC also continues to advocate at the federal level for the bipartisan Amputation Reduction and Compassion (ARC) Act, which would require Medicare and Medicaid to fully cover PAD screening for at-risk beneficiaries.

For more information about the ABC and its PAD Initiative, visit www.abc cardio.org.

About the Association of Black Cardiologists

Founded in 1974, the ABC is a nonprofit organization with an international membership of over 2,000 health professionals, community health advocates, corporate partners, and institutional members. ABC is dedicated to eliminating disparities in cardiovascular disease and improving health outcomes for all people of color by advancing innovative research, education, advocacy, and community outreach. With strong public and private partnerships, ABC continues to drive meaningful impact in communities nationwide.

Media Contact:

Rachel Williams

646-389-0659

395252@email4pr.com

SOURCE Association of Black Cardiologists

WANT YOUR COMPANY'S NEWS FEATURED ON PRNEWswire.COM?

440k+
Newsrooms &
Influencers

9k+
Digital Media
Outlets

270k+
Journalists
Opted In

GET STARTED