

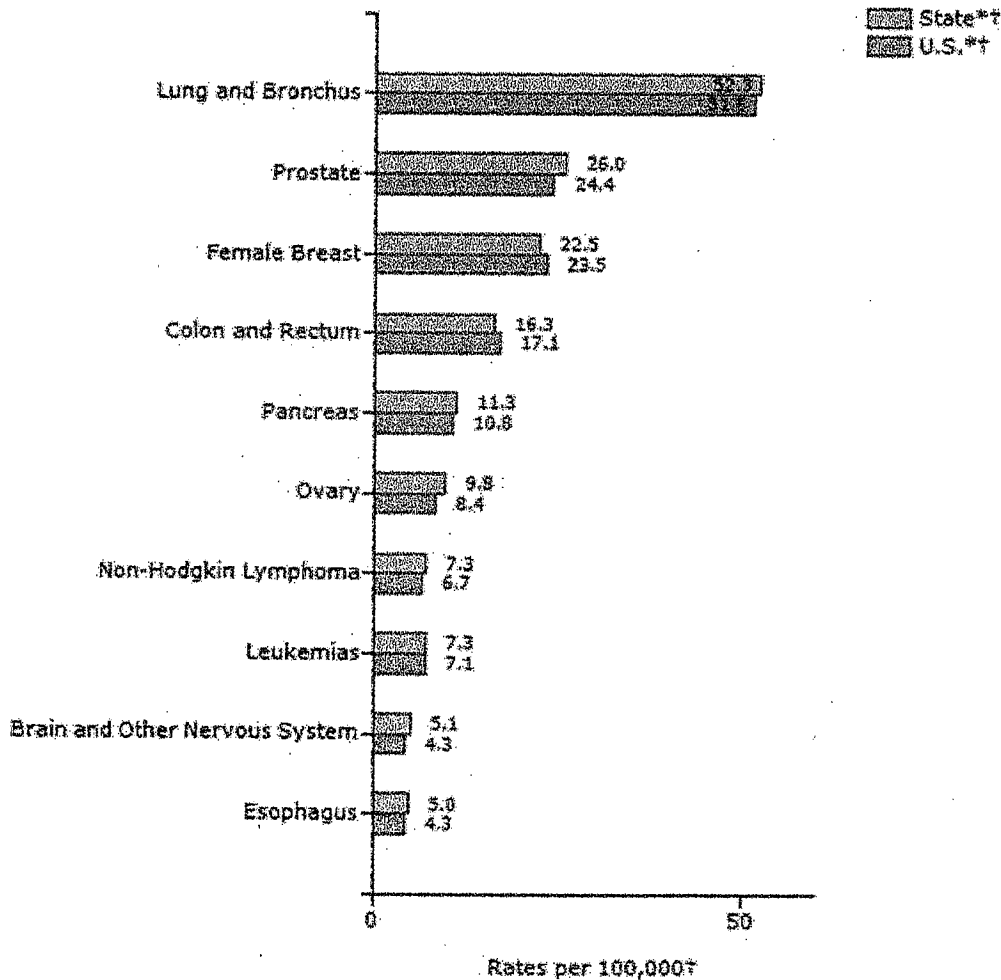
Written Testimony of **Paul Schipper, MD, FACS, FACCP**

Associate Professor of Surgery, Thoracic Oncologist  
Program Director, Cardiothoracic Surgery Residency  
Oregon Health and Sciences University  
Portland, OR

Testimony, Public Hearing  
HRC 17

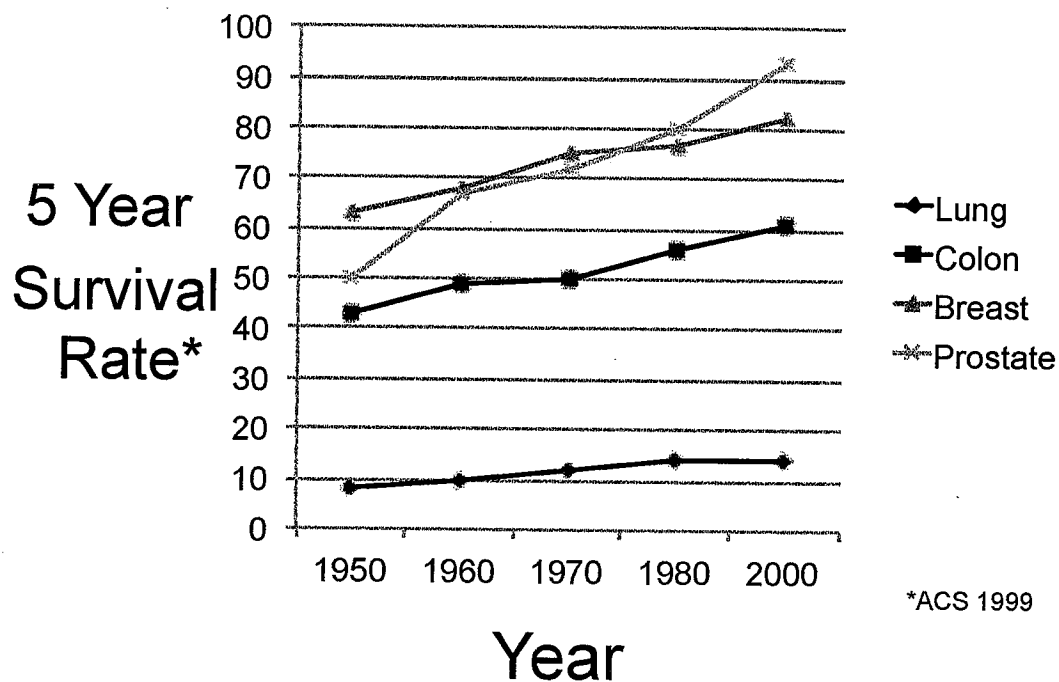
In 2011, lung cancer was the second leading cause of death in the United States. Heart disease killed 569,339 people, lung cancer 156,614. (National Vital Statistics Reports 2011). This is not the second leading cancer killer. In the cancer list, lung cancer is the number one killer and kills more people than the next 3 deadliest cancers –Prostate, Colon and Breast—combined. This is the main list of everything that kills Americans. Lung cancer also kills Oregonians:

**State vs. National Rates, Men and Women, Oregon 2004 - 2008**



In the United States and in Oregon, if we invest time, resources, and effort into a problem, we solve it. Below are the cure rates for the 4 leading cancer killers: Lung, Colon, Breast, and Prostate. Across the horizontal axis is time in decades. Along the vertical axis is the cure rate for all comers, each cancer. In 1950, the cure rate for colon cancer was 41%. Now it is 60%. For breast cancer in 1950, the cure rate was 50%, now it is well over 90%. For lung cancer, the cure rate for all comers was 9% and 50 years later it is essentially the same number at 14%.

## Cure Rate by Decade



Now ask yourself what do you personally know about each of these cancers. How do you find or prevent colon cancer—high fiber diet and a colonoscopy at age 50; breast cancer—mammograms and self breast exams; prostate cancer—digital rectal exam and a PSA blood test. We as a society have invested time and resources into these diseases, have made huge progress in curing them, and are able to have a conversation about colonoscopy, rectal exams, and breast exams but somehow lung cancer carries a stigma or a taboo of blame. So, how about lung cancer? Stop smoking or never smoke is excellent advice. However, 40% of lung cancers occur in people who have stopped smoking and 15% in people who never smoked. And why hasn't the cure rate for the 2<sup>nd</sup> most common form of death for Americans changed in the last 50 years? First, it is because we as a society just don't talk about it and second, we have not applied ourselves in the form of resources.

The bill before you today asks you to lead in the solution to this problem by fueling the conversation in Oregon. The lung cancer team at OHSU and I urge you to support this bill.

Second, is a list of what to do next:

- 1) Support lung cancer screening in the form of a low dose screening CT according to the positive results of the National Lung Cancer Screening Trial.
- 2) Support lung cancer research at Oregon institutions.
- 3) Support patient advocacy and outreach programs to bring equally effective lung cancer care to all counties in Oregon.