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Michigan recognized as a leader in cervical cancer prevention

Michigan received a "Very Good" rating in its battle against cervical cancer in a national study and continues to show itself as a leader among states in combating this disease, State Senator Martha G. Scott (D-Highland Park) recently announced.

"Cervical cancer is one of the only cancers that can almost always be prevented with the right knowledge and preventative steps," Scott said. "I am very glad to see Michigan moving in the right direction and leading the battle against this deadly disease."

Michigan received 16 out of 22 points, the same as it received in 2009, in "A Roadmap for Success: The State of Cervical Cancer Prevention in America 2010" report by Women in Government, a non-profit, bi-partisan organization representing women state legislators. In Michigan, the incidence of cervical cancer is 7.1 per 100,000, with a mortality rate of 1.8 per 100,000 and a screening rate of 80.1 percent.

Nationwide, the report showed that states are making progress in the fight against cervical cancer, and there has been a steady decline in mortality rates from cervical cancer and in the number of cervical cancer cases due to better screening processes and HPV vaccines.

All of the findings are published in "A Roadmap for Success: The State of Cervical

Cancer Prevention in America 2010." This report is the sixth and final state-by-state comparison report released by Women In Government and is designed to highlight the tremendous strides that have been made to battle cervical cancer since Women In Government took up the initiative six years ago.

"We continue to look forward to the day when the elimination of cervical cancer is a reality," said Mary Brooks Beatty, president of Women in Government. "Continued efforts are needed to ensure that all women have access to the most appropriate cervical cancer prevention technologies, including the HPV test and the HPV vaccine."

Cervical cancer is the second most common cancer in women worldwide. In the U.S., the American Cancer Society estimates that 11,270 women will have been diagnosed with cervical cancer and 4,070 women will have died of the disease in 2009. Cervical cancer is caused by high-risk types of HPV (human papillomavirus). HPV is a very common sexually transmitted infection that three of four adults will have at some time in their lives. Most of these infections go away on their own without treatment. Infections that do not go away on their own can lead to cervical cancer.

A Pap test is the traditional method used for cervi-

cal cancer screening. An HPV test identifies women who are infected with high-risk types of HPV that could potentially lead to cervical cancer. Clinical studies suggest that screening with both a Pap test and an HPV test offers women aged 30 and older the best protection against cervical cancer. An HPV vaccine is now FDA-approved for girls and young women ages 9-26.

It has been shown to be 100 percent effective in women not previously infected at preventing infection with the two types of HPV that cause approximately 70 percent of all cervical cancers. HPV vaccination does not protect against all the HPV types that can cause cervical cancer, meaning that women who have been vaccinated still need to be screened to protect against the HPV types that are not covered by the vaccine.

Women in Government is a national non-profit, bi-partisan organization of women state legislators providing leadership opportunities, networking, expert forums and educational resources to address and resolve complex public policy issues. For more information, visit www.womeningovernment.org.

To access a copy of "A Roadmap for Success: The State of Cervical Cancer Prevention in America 2010," please visit http://www.womeningovernment.org/prevention/state_report/2010.