Dear (your local MP,)

As a constituent of yours and someone who has been affected by breast cancer (first-hand), I wanted to get in touch to ask for your help with raising awareness of secondary breast cancer.

\*( I've been/am a friend/family of someone living with primary/secondary breast cancer for….. and I will be on treatment for life.)

Around 55,000 women and 380 men are diagnosed every year in the UK and sadly, 11,500 die annually. It’s the most common female cancer in the UK, and the biggest killer of women under the age of 50, but we are behind other European countries on survival rates.

We need much more research into why breast cancer kills, and we need to invest more in the drugs that keep thousands \*(the likes of myself and thousands of others) alive. Unfortunately, the treatments don't work forever, and lives are being tragically cut short due to the shortage of effective treatments. The median life expectancy of someone diagnosed with secondary breast cancer is between 2-5 years, but there are some who live longer and are proving that a secondary diagnosis doesn’t have to be a death sentence.

Although the matter has been addressed several times in the past, geographical inequalities still exist across the country. Patients should have equal and fair access to diagnostics, care, and support, as well as equal access to life extending treatments, procedures, and drugs.

For years, the focus of Breast Cancer Awareness Month and any associated research has been on primary breast cancer, but what about those \*(of us) with stage 4 incurable breast cancer? We know that around 30% of primary diagnoses will develop into secondaries, and this statistic along with the number of annual deaths aren’t decreasing.

This leads me onto the other important matter of a national secondary breast cancer audit. Here again, for years, we have been lobbying for this, and still, the needs of secondary breast cancer patients are being ignored. There is no robust data within the NHS and without this vital information how can we better support services and patients, and make progress? The data will ultimately help us understand why so many lose their lives to this cruel and fatal disease. As I mentioned before, we’ve addressed this numerous times, and this was supposed to have been mandatory back in 2012 when there was a pilot scheme with Breast Cancer Care and Breast Cancer Now. We don’t know exactly how many

women and men are living with this disease; it’s an estimated guess. \*(We want to be counted, because we don’t want to die and leave our loved ones prematurely. Our time is of the essence; there’s no time to wait.)

We must seize the opportunity to improve breast cancer outcomes in the UK by firstly ensuring that we fund a National Secondary Breast Cancer Audit as a matter of urgency.

We must not allow the pressures of the pandemic to stall any long-term vision and investment into secondary breast cancer. The UK cancer crisis is already critical and is resulting in delayed diagnoses, patients not receiving their vital treatment and an ever-increasing backlog. It’s imperative that we begin taking the necessary steps to ensure that secondary breast cancer patients receive the best and rightful levels of treatment, care, and support, and thus ultimately safeguarding the future of our loved ones.

Therefore, I would be extremely grateful to have your support, by kindly asking you to request that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP addresses all the afore mentioned in the upcoming Comprehensive Spending Review as an urgent matter.

This would mean so much to me and the thousands of other women and men who are invisible and living with secondary breast cancer in the UK.

Yours Sincerely,

\*optional. Amend as required.