Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts in April signed LB 195, also known as “Cheri’s Law,” requiring that women be notified of breast tissue density following mammograms. It had passed the state’s unicameral legislature by a vote of 48-0. The law requires that written notice be given to women if a mammogram reveals heterogeneous or extremely dense breast tissue. Such tissue can make breast cancer more difficult to detect. Under the new law, mammography patients must be told that a finding of dense breast tissue is normal, and that notice is being given to raise awareness and so patients can further discuss risk factors and detection methods with their doctor.

According to the Nebraska Radio Network, the law was named for Cheri Rauth, an Omaha resident who died of breast cancer within 18 months of a mammogram due, her family believes, to dense breast tissue. Nebraska is now among 32 states with breast density reporting laws, including Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota and Ohio. Illinois and Indiana have public education efforts, but do not require reporting, according to DenseBreast-info.org.

Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death among women.