U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01) presented Margarita “Maggie” Gardner with the Nancy Pilver Breast Cancer Heroine Award to honor her dedicated advocacy on behalf of breast cancer survivors and her work in the fight against the disease.

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**Larson Presents Breast Cancer Heroine Award to Maggie Gardner of Hartford**

***Hartford, CT***- U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01) presented Margarita “Maggie” Gardner with the Nancy Pilver Breast Cancer Heroine Award to honor her dedicated advocacy on behalf of breast cancer survivors and her work in the fight against the disease.

Diagnosed with breast cancer in 2006, Maggie contacted Congressman Larson in that year to ask for assistance with her Social Security Disability claim. While facing breast cancer, she feared while going through the bureaucratic process with the Social Security Administration that she would face financial setbacks or lose her home. Fortunately, because of her dire needs, Congressman Larson was able to support her claim and request that her case be expedited. As a result, Maggie was able to win her fight against breast cancer and carry on her life without long term financial ramifications.

As a result of the issues she encountered while battling breast cancer, Maggie established “Gardner’s House”, a non-profit focused on providing a one-stop place for individuals with breast cancer to receive guidance through the medical and assistance system as well as mental and emotional support. Particularly, Gardner has reached out to the African American community in Greater Hartford to increase overall awareness of breast cancer.

**“Maggie is truly an inspiration to us all. She has supported countless women and their families through the mental and physical dilemmas presented by this severe disease. She is an advocate who has used her own story to transform the lives of others, and I am honored to present her with this award, “**said Congressman Larson**.**

The award is given annually during Breast Cancer Awareness Month. It was created by Congressman Larson and is named in honor of Nancy Pilver, the first recipient of the award in 1999. Pilver, a breast cancer activist and former Manchester resident, served as the State Legislative Chair of the Connecticut Breast Cancer Coalition Foundation. Inspired by her story, Congressman Larson named the award in her honor in 2000. Pilver passed away in 2003.

Congressman Larson presented the award to Maggie Gardner in his Hartford District Office.

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