

March 15, 2010

From: America's Prostate Cancer Organizations

To: Members of the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives

Contact: Scott Williams – 202-xxx-xxxx

The undersigned organizations commend Congress and the Administration for continuing to seek ways to improve the health and wellbeing of all Americans. However, we are concerned that the health care needs of males and men with, and at risk of, prostate cancer, are being overlooked in the health reform debate.

Building on that concern, on March 4, 2010 the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee held hearings on prostate cancer, the first such hearing in 11 years.

The committee heard testimony from prostate cancer patients and their families, including those who have lived through the effects of advanced disease, as well as from independent researchers and government research agencies.

The committee received the following key messages:

- Researchers and patients alike agree on the need for early detection of potentially lethal prostate cancer and the need for a new diagnostic test with the ability to differentiate between potentially lethal and indolent forms of this cancer
- Researchers and patients also agree on the need for a significant increase in federal research funding to help to find: (a) such a new and better diagnostic test and (b) more effective and safer treatments for men with all forms of potentially lethal prostate cancer.
- There was overwhelming support for development of an Office of Men's Health within the Department of Health and Human Services to provide coordination of existing federal male health programs, and to promote education, prevention, and wellness activities related to all male health issues, including prostate cancer.
- There has been a fundamental breakdown in the delivery of healthcare to men and men's use of healthcare.
 - Tom Farrington, an African-American prostate cancer survivor, explained that his doctor never talked to him about prostate cancer, even though his father, both grandfathers, and an uncle had died of prostate cancer. Because of his experience, and because prostate cancer is an epidemic in Black America, Mr. Farrington founded the Prostate Cancer Health Education Network to address this epidemic through education and awareness and research.
- As caregivers for their families, women carry an immense burden when prostate cancer affects their husbands, fathers, and other family members.
 - Mrs. Betty Gallo, widow of the late Congressman Dean Gallo, explained that her husband died from metastatic prostate cancer because it was detected too late. To unite women's voices, Mrs. Gallo co-founded Women Against Prostate Cancer
- Tests for prostate cancer risk need to be covered by health reform.
 - Tests for prostate cancer risk covered by insurance in 37 states will be eliminated if either of the current health reform bills passes with modification.

In light of this historic hearing, America's Prostate Cancer Organizations ask that Congress move decisively in the following areas:

- All health insurance plans, including government-mandated plans, should include coverage of regular testing for prostate cancer (including the prostate-specific antigen or PSA test and the digital rectal examination or DRE) – and its subsequent diagnosis.
- Research funding is a top priority. We support a significant increase in funding for the Prostate Cancer Research Program (PCRP) of the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP) at the Department of Defense, which has been funded at \$80 million each year since 2001.

- An Office of Men's Health is critical, and we continue to support the need for an Office of Men's Health (comparable to the highly successful Office of Woman's Health) within the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) that can represent the specific health interests of the male population of America.

Signed: America's Prostate Cancer Organizations

Bat for the Cure – www.erbatfortheure.org

Malecare Prostate Cancer Support – www.malecare.com

Men's Health Network – www.menshealthnetwork.org

National Alliance of State Prostate Cancer Coalitions – www.naspcc.org

Prostate Cancer Foundation – www.pcf.org

Prostate Cancer International – www.pcainternational.org

Prostate Conditions Education Council – www.prostateconditions.org

Prostate Health Education Network – www.prostatehealthed.org

The Prostate Net – www.theprostatenet.org

Us TOO International Prostate Cancer Education and Support Network – www.ustoo.org

Women Against Prostate Cancer – www.womenagainstoprostatecancer.org

ZERO – The Project to End Prostate Cancer – www.zerocancer.org

Supportive organizations:

RetireSafe – www.retiresafe.org

Veterans Health Council – www.veteranshealth.org

Vietnam Veterans of America – www.vva.org