



June 21, 2022

The Honorable Paul Sarlo
New Jersey Senate
400 North Church St., Suite 260
Moorestown, NJ 08057

RE: S-791, Cost-Free Coverage for Prostate Cancer Screening before the Budget and Appropriations Committee

Dear Senator Sarlo,

The undersigned organizations represent patient advocacy groups and physicians in the state who **strongly support S-791**, which would require health insurance policies to provide coverage for prostate cancer screening without imposing a deductible, coinsurance, copayment, or any other cost-sharing requirement. Notably, the bill defines prostate cancer screening to include medically necessary follow-up testing to definitively diagnose the disease. **We would respectfully request that you post the bill for a vote during the next meeting of the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee.**

Our organizations are dedicated to saving lives by improving access to screening services that can help catch prostate cancer early - when the disease is almost 100 percent survivable. Early detection for patients at high risk improves outcomes and can reduce health disparities in the populations most impacted by prostate cancer.

Prostate cancer is the second-leading cause of cancer deaths among men in the United States and a significant healthcare problem due to its high incidence. For 2022, the American Cancer Society projects 8,580 new cases of prostate cancer in New Jersey, more than any other cancer type.¹

¹ American Cancer Society, Cancer Facts & Figures 2022.

(https://cancerstatisticscenter.cancer.org/?_ga=2.256055307.101989272.1650047944-1361276735.1650047944#!/state/New%20Jersey)

Certain risk factors, including family history of prostate cancer and ancestry, significantly raise an individual's risk of prostate cancer, making early detection even more important. African American men are nearly two times more likely to be diagnosed with and die from prostate cancer. One in six African American men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in their lifetime. African American men are diagnosed with more aggressive disease, at younger ages, and at higher incidence compared to white men in settings of equal access to treatment. This racial disparity in mortality is currently the worst among all cancers in the United States.

The clinical value of prostate cancer screening has been scientifically validated and endorsed by the American Urological Association, American Cancer Society, National Comprehensive Cancer Network, American Society of Clinical Oncology, and American College of Physicians. It is a necessary step to diagnose prostate cancer as part of a larger conversation between patient and provider about prostate cancer risk.

Late-stage prostate cancers place an increased economic burden on the health care system, including lost worker productivity and increased financial burdens for patients and their caregivers.

While existing law requires health insurance policies to provide coverage for the screening and diagnosis of prostate cancer, the cost of these services may deter or prevent high-risk and underserved populations from seeking care and detecting early-stage disease. Insurance co-pays, co-insurance, and deductibles may leave the patient responsible for paying for the full costs of the screening.

Similar legislation was passed in New York (SB 6882, 2018), Maryland (SB 661, 2020), Rhode Island (H 5432, 2021), and Illinois (HB 5318, 2022) which eliminates out-of-pocket expenses for high-risk patients while also protecting them from discrimination and preserving their access to necessary, and often lifesaving, screening.

Thank you, and please consider this our endorsement of S791, a crucial bill to improve the lives of men and their loved ones in New Jersey. **We would again ask the you to post S791 for a vote during the next meeting of the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee.**

Respectfully,

American Association of Clinical Urologists
Active Surveillance Patients International (ASPI)
American College of Surgeons
American Urological Association
AnCan Foundation
Cancer and Careers
FORCE: Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered
ICAN, International Cancer Advocacy Network
National Nurses United
Prostate Cancer Research Institute
Prostate Conditions Education Council
Society of Urologic Nurses and Associates
ZERO – The End of Prostate Cancer

c. The Honorable Troy Singleton