

**SUPPORT HR1903**  
**The Post Prostate Cancer Treatment Equity Act**

**NEED TO ENSURE INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR  
PROSTATE CANCER SURVIVORS**

- The American Cancer Society estimates that 1 in 6 men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer during the course of their lifetime.
- About 221,000 new cases of prostate cancer are diagnosed every year compared with some 213,000 per year for breast cancer. About 30% of these new prostate cancer cases occur in men under the age of 65 who are not eligible for Medicare.
- Surgery, generally radical prostatectomy, is the treatment of choice for prostate cancer for about **80,000** men each year. During this surgical procedure, the surgeon removes the entire prostate, surrounding tissue, and nearby lymph nodes.
- Following radical prostatectomy, about **50%** of these patients may have significant complications such as incontinence and impotence.
- Loss of bladder control and/or impotence and erectile dysfunction impose heavy burdens and impair the quality of life for patients and their partners.
- For about 6,000 men annually, additional surgery can be the only effective way to correct prostate cancer treatment complications of bladder control and ED problems. Of these, 6,000 men 70% are Medicare beneficiaries and 30% are insured by private payers.
- Surgery involves implanting a prosthetic urology device, *i.e.*, urinary sphincter and/or penile prosthesis. Urinary sphincter devices mimic natural sphincter function and keep the urethra closed, enabling patients to control bladder storage, bladder emptying, and urination. Penile prostheses replicate normal erectile function, enabling patients to regain lost function and return to normal interpersonal relationships with dignity.
- **Insurance coverage for prosthetic urology procedures varies.** Medicare and some private insurers cover these procedures. Some one third of private insurance plans, however, associate these prosthetic urology procedures solely with sexual dysfunction disorders and thus inadvertently may limit or exclude coverage for these important types of post-cancer treatments – effectively denying men access to necessary restorative procedures.
- In passing the “Women’s Health and Cancer Rights Act of 1998,” Congress recognized that breast reconstruction surgery is an important component of a woman’s total breast cancer treatment and recovery.
- The “Women’s Health and Cancer Rights Act” requires private health insurers to cover breast reconstruction following mastectomies if the insurer covers treatment for breast cancer.
- In the same fashion, prosthetic urology procedures are critical to the health and well being of men who suffer from incontinence and impotence following prostate cancer surgery.
- The cost of providing such coverage for men is very modest according to a study by a leading estimator.
- **Congress therefore should ensure that insurance plans cover post-prostate cancer prosthetic urology treatments on the same terms as breast reconstruction following mastectomies.**