

October 26, 2016

Honorable Marsha Blackburn
Vice Chairman
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
2266 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Bobby L. Rush
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
2188 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Support for H.R. 1151, the USPSTF Transparency and Accountability Act of 2015

Dear Representatives Blackburn and Rush:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations from the Urology Policy Forum (UPF), we write to express our support for your legislation, the United States Preventative Services Task Force (USPSTF) Transparency and Accountability Act of 2015 (H.R. 1151).

We remain deeply concerned with a number of USPSTF recommendations and their effect on limiting access to preventive care for Americans. For instance, the USPSTF recommended against screening for prostate cancer in healthy men with a prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test. The USPSTF also recommended against routine screening mammograms on an annual basis for women ages 40-49. More recently, the USPSTF gave an “I” designation to screening for cognitive impairment—meaning it is not recommended for routine care—despite research showing that half of all dementia cases are missed by general practitioners.

Many times these recommendations contradict clinical guidelines based on medical literature and others with expertise in the clinical topic under review. Recommendations and review of the scientific evidence are important, but the reality of these recommendations are undermining new models of care delivery that are patient-centered, comprehensive, coordinated, accessible, and focused on quality.

Despite its large influence, the USPSTF members are appointed by the director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). As you know, there is no Congressional appointment process or oversight. More worrisome, Task Force members have not always met with relevant stakeholders during their review process. Because the Task Force does not fall under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, it is not required to have a public comment period and often there is no dialogue with cancer or other specialists.

Your bill addresses these issues by making evidence reports and recommendations available for public comment. It also convenes a preventive services stakeholders board to provide feedback on Task Force

activities and recommend preventive services and scientific evidence for the Task Force to review, which will improve the transparency of the process as recommendations are developed.

The undersigned organizations agree that the USPSTF is in need of immediate procedural reform. **We appreciate your continued focus on this important issue, and ask that you work towards the point where the committee further investigates and potentially holds a hearing to examine the important impact this legislation will have on patients across the country.**

Sincerely,

American Association of Clinical Urologists
American Urological Association
ION Solutions, an AmerisourceBergen Company
Kidney Cancer Association
LUGPA
Men's Health Network
Prevent Cancer Foundation
Prostate Cancer Research Institute
Prostate Conditions Education Council
Prostate Health Education Network
Us Too
Veterans Health Council
Vietnam Veterans of America
Zero – The End of Prostate Cancer

cc: Members of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce