

Testimony of the  
Connecticut Urology Society  
Connecticut Society of Eye Physicians  
Connecticut ENT Society

Connecticut Dermatology and Dermatologic Surgery Society  
SB 396 AN ACT CONCERNING INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR CERTAIN THERAPIES AND  
PRESCRIPTION DRUGS FOR THE TREATMENT OF PROSTATE CANCER.

Before the Insurance and Real Estate Health Committee

On

February 10, 2011

Good afternoon Senator Crisco, Representative Megna and other distinguished members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee. My name is Dr. Joseph Wagner, and I am a board certified urologist working in, Farmington Connecticut. I am here representing over 1200 M.D.s in various medical fields in support of SB396 An Act Concerning Insurance Coverage for Certain Therapies and Prescription Drugs for the Treatment of Prostate Cancer.

I would like to thank the committee for addressing these two important issues that have a profound impact on the lives of men afflicted with prostate cancer and their families.

Prostate cancer is one of the most common cancers diagnosed in men with over 217,000 new cases per year nationally and approximately 2,400 cases in Connecticut. Radiation therapy, in the form of external beam therapy or interstitial seed placement, has been proven to be safe and effective treatments for the disease. Both are widely considered to be the standard of care. It is critical to the health and well being of Connecticut citizens that these treatment options be appropriately covered by any and all health insurance plans and should not be denied as "experimental or not medically necessary".

Radical prostatectomy is also one of the main forms of curative treatment for prostate cancer with approximately 800 patients in Connecticut seeking this treatment annually. Advances in surgical techniques have resulted in improved cancer cure and control. Despite these improvements men may still suffer from treatment side effects of incontinence and impotence.

Impotence, by itself, can be a life and relationship altering condition. Compound that condition with the diagnosis of cancer and the impact is devastating to the patient and his partner. After prostate cancer surgery there are permanent physical changes that take place in a man's penis that endanger his ability to achieve an erection either naturally or with the help of medication. Research studies published in peer reviewed literature have demonstrated that early and regular utilization of 5-phosphodiesterase inhibitors (Viagra, Levitra and Cialis) more quickly and permanently restores potency after radical prostatectomy. It has been demonstrated that men who take nightly 5-phosphodiesterase inhibitors for nine months post surgery are five times more likely to have spontaneous erections sufficient for satisfactory sexual intercourse. These treatment protocols have now become standard of care.

Unfortunately, few if any insurance companies provide any coverage for these medications. All too often, the treatment of impotence even if it is associated with prostate cancer is looked upon by the payors as unnecessary, untested and elective. Men are notorious for not wanting to bring attention to such an intimate condition but now the science is mature. These drugs help.

We ask that you please consider support for this important piece of legislation for the sake of all the men and their partners who suffer from prostate cancer related impotence. I will be happy to take any questions.