

AUA Applauds Introduction Of USPSTF Transparency & Accountability Act Of 2019

LINTHICUM, Md., June 27, 2019 /PRNewswire/ -- As part of its ongoing commitment to preserving men's access to prostate cancer screening, the American Urological Association (AUA) today applauded the introduction of H.R. 3534, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) Transparency & Accountability Act of 2019. The bipartisan bill was introduced by Reps. Bobby Rush (D-IL-1), Phil Roe, MD (R-TN-1), Neal Dunn, MD (R-FL-2) and Judy Chu (D-CA-27). A Senate companion bill is expected to be introduced later this year.

The AUA remains concerned about the lack of transparency in the USPSTF's review process, as well as the effect that a number of its recommendations have on limiting access to preventive care. The amount of influence that the USPSTF's recommendations have over Americans' preventive health decisions necessitates that its review process and evidence reports be shared with the public, including patients and the physicians who treat specific diseases. Moreover, the AUA strongly supports additional research to support better-informed recommendations on how diseases – such as prostate cancer – impact vulnerable populations.

In recent years, the USPSTF has issued a number of controversial screening recommendations on multiple conditions, including prostate, breast and skin cancers, vision services for children and seniors, and dementia screening in older Americans. Some of these recommendations are in direct conflict with existing clinical guidelines, and undermine patient-centered, quality-focused models of care delivery.

This important bill calls for reforms to the USPSTF and the process by which the group makes formal recommendations regarding preventive care services for Americans. Specifically, the bill calls for expanded research plans that account for subpopulations; requires the USPSTF to convene a stakeholders board to provide feedback on activity and to recommend topics and evidence for review; and mandates a 45-day minimum comment period for public comments. Additionally, the USPSTF would be required to respond to specific public comments on research plans and recommendations.

"Creating recommendations in a closed review process without input from the public and key stakeholders like disease specialists has the potential to do great harm to patients," said AUA Public Policy Chair Dr. Christopher Gonzalez. "While we acknowledge that the USPSTF has taken steps in recent years to be more transparent and open to input, it is important that we formalize this new process to ensure that it continues and that the USPSTF provide comprehensive, fully informed recommendations to the American public."

"We'd like to thank Reps. Rush and Chu – and Drs. Roe and Dunn – for their support on this important endeavor."

For more information about the AUA's position on the USPSTF Transparency and Accountability Act of 2019, please contact the AUA Communications office at 410-689-3932 or via e-mail to communications@AUAnet.org.

**Contact: Wendy Isett, AUA
410-689-3789, wisett@AUAnet.org**

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