

**OPENING STATEMENT OF REP. HENRY A. WAXMAN  
RANKING DEMOCRATIC MEMBER  
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM**

**HEARING ON PROSTATE CANCER  
SEPTEMBER 23, 1999**

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased that we are having a hearing on the important issue of prostate cancer. Except for skin cancer, prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in American men. In this year alone, an estimated 37,000 American men will die of the disease.

We face many challenges relating to prostate cancer. Questions remain unresolved about the causes and biology of prostate cancer, and about why there are racial differences in incidence rates. We must continue to concentrate our efforts on developing the most effective prevention, detection, and treatment approaches. We also must work to ensure that all men have access to appropriate treatment and to accurate information about their treatment options.

As we face these challenges, it is important that we keep an open mind about innovative and unconventional approaches to prostate cancer treatment and prevention. At the same time, we must promote thorough testing and review of these approaches to avoid unnecessary harm and expense to consumers.

Some of today's witnesses will share their personal experiences with prostate cancer. Others will highlight ongoing efforts to advance prostate cancer prevention, detection, and treatment. This discussion will increase our understanding of the options currently available to men who are diagnosed with prostate cancer, and of the research efforts we should continue to explore. I join my colleagues in welcoming them and look forward to their testimony.