

Greetings: Elected Officials/Public Policy

Senator Anthony Hill, Sr.

Good morning. A few years ago, I discovered the only way to move public policy is through elected officials. What we are dealing with when it comes to prostate cancer is trying to ensure that every state has a mandate such that when a man goes to the doctor, that they be checked for prostate cancer; this is a public policy issue. We, as elected officials and health care professionals, must connect the dots; we are too disconnected from one another.

When Dr. Odedina and crew came to Tallahassee to discuss formation of a task force, there was a problem trying to get such a task force going, let alone dealing with insurance companies fighting against mandating that a doctor inquire about prostate cancer with each male patient. These traveling symposia and workshops allow for a link to elected officials who can move public policy issues, even in the area of research with the Department of Defense, in order to, for example, make funds available. I am convinced that early detection leads to direction.

There is a lot of work to be done in this area. I appreciate what you are doing today. Words are inadequate for me to share with you what you are doing here this weekend because we are going to save some lives. We are going to get information and prevention materials out to people so they can live. The 100 Black Men are the appropriate organization to have on the front line of this cause; they have taken up this matter in our community to ensure that this information gets out to the public. Florida is among the top three states in terms of number of deaths due to prostate cancer; we can save lives and take Florida down to the lower percentile by educating people.

Ten years ago, I was 25 lb under 300 lb: I was a candidate for diabetes, prostate cancer, you name it. What you are doing is important, and people are hearing it and listening. The best way to practice the sermon is to live it. What we do each and every day, I try to ensure that I can be an example when standing in front of men to say look where God has brought me. Life is equally balanced between good and evil. Whatever you come out of this conference with, you will tilt the scale. Thank you.