

King Announces Plans to Have Surgery to Remove Prostate Cancer

WASHINGTON D.C. – Today, U.S. Senator Angus King (I-Maine) announced plans to undergo surgery for prostate cancer.

“It’s a story we hear again and again – early detection saves lives. In this case, the story is mine. Not once, but twice,” said Senator King. “Forty years ago, as a young man, a routine screening found an aggressive form of skin cancer. And, thanks to the doctors who caught it early, and my health insurance, I was cancer free within months.

“And once again, early detection during an annual physical put me on the path to wellness. This time, during an annual check-up this spring, my doctors caught prostate cancer. And, after studying all of my options, and in consultation with my doctors and my family, I’ve decided to have surgery at the end of this week to remove the cancer.

“Let’s face it; cancer is a scary word to hear. So it might seem unusual to say this, but today, I actually feel pretty fortunate. The fact is, millions of Americans bravely and quietly fight more aggressive cancers than mine every day. Many of them do so in the face of great financial hardship and without the support of their friends and family. I cannot imagine the strength it must take to carry on against that kind of adversity.

“In my case, the doctors found my cancer early. We have a plan to treat it, and plan for a full recovery. So when you see me on the Senate floor in a couple of weeks, or during the August work period in Maine, or on the campaign trail in a couple of years, you will see that I’m back to work with as much energy and dedication to serving you that I promised nearly three years ago. And, I will return with a renewed sense of commitment to standing up for the people of Maine.”

Prostate cancer is a common disease affecting the male prostate gland. In fact, the American Cancer Society reports, prostate cancer is so prevalent that about 1 in every 7 men will have a prostate cancer diagnosis during his lifetime. Most prostate cancers are slow growing; and with early detection, they can be eradicated with surgery or radiation. Surgery for prostate cancer is a common treatment for the disease and, in most cases, has minimal side effects.

Senator King had experienced no symptoms or signs of the disease, but a routine medical exam in April revealed some abnormalities in his bloodwork indicating possible prostate cancer. Shortly after, a biopsy confirmed the diagnosis. A series of body scans over the last month showed no sign of spread outside of the prostate area, substantially improving the prognosis for successful treatment.

One of Senator King’s first calls upon learning of his diagnosis was to his brother-in-law, and close friend, John Herman, a senior member of the medical staff at Massachusetts General Hospital (“MGH”) in Boston. Dr. Herman arranged consultations with urological-oncologist specialists who are now directing Senator King’s treatment.

Dr. Douglas M. Dahl will perform the surgery this Friday, June 26, 2015 at MGH. Senator King requested the first day of the July 4th Congressional recess, thereby minimizing his absence from Washington.

“I’m looking forward to a full recovery and to continuing my service in the Senate,” said Senator King. “And no, this does not my affect my intention to run for re-election, except my poor little prostate won’t be along for the ride.”

Since his diagnosis, Senator King has talked to colleagues and friends about their successful experience with prostate cancer. On their advice, and the advice of his doctors, Senator King intends to return to work as soon as possible after Senate’s July recess.

Senator King told his family about the diagnosis in May and told staff on a conference call this morning.

Senator King is a cancer survivor. As a young man, he was diagnosed with malignant melanoma. These cancers are unrelated.