



NATIONAL KIDNEY FOUNDATION®

of Michigan

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March 1, 2024

Dear Members of the Michigan House of Representatives- Committee on Education:

The National Kidney Foundation of Michigan stands in support of House Bill 5174 that will provide donor registry education for 9th graders.

Every day, 17 patients die on the transplant waitlist. More than 104,000 people are currently waiting for an organ transplant nationally, and a new person is added to the waiting list every nine minutes. Of those on the waiting list, more than 2,400 are Michigan residents. The number waiting remains high because there aren't enough donated organs to meet the need for transplants; in fact, only a small percentage of people die in a way that makes organ donation medically possible. Because of this, it is critical that every opportunity for donation is acted upon and that anyone who supports organ donation registers to be an organ donor.

Persons in need of a transplant wait an average of 3-5 years for a kidney transplant, but in some states the wait can be as long as 10 years. Transplant is the gold standard of care for kidney failure. It improves a person living with kidney disease quality of life and extends life expectancy while also costing Medicare and Medicaid less than long-term dialysis.

Continuing to provide education and awareness regarding the donor registry is an essential component to ensuring that organ and tissue donation is available for those in need of a transplant. By registering to become an organ, eye and tissue donor, one person could help more than 75 people — and that's not counting the lives that those 75 people touch. Evidence demonstrates that, "Organ donation education in schools significantly increases organ donor registration, knowledge, and family discussion".¹ The National Kidney Foundation of Michigan supports education and awareness regarding the donor registry to improve the quality of life for individuals living with kidney disease and implementing House Bill 5174 will increase the donor registry, therefore, we gladly seek support for this bill.

Sincerely,

Linda Smith-Wheelock
CEO and President

¹Byrne, Matthew. (2020). Organ donation education in schools significantly increases organ donor registration, knowledge, and family discussion. 10.13140/RG.2.2.32997.35044.