

**TESTIMONY OF DIANE CALMUS  
SENIOR DIRECTOR, FEDERAL GOV'T AFFAIRS  
AMERICA'S BLOOD CENTERS  
BEFORE THE TAX POLICY COMMITTEE  
MICHIGAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
ON HOUSE BILL 4068  
APRIL 12, 2023**

My name is Diane Calmus. I am the Senior Director, Federal Government Affairs for America's Blood Centers (ABC). America's Blood Centers is the national organization that brings together the community-based blood centers that collect about 60 percent of the U.S. blood supply including right here in Michigan.

I ask you to support HB 4068 because it will save lives and improve the lives of Michiganders.

A safe and available blood supply is a core component of our nation's healthcare system. A wide range of patients need blood transfusions every day, including new mothers who may

experiencing delivery complications, cancer patients who require blood as part of their regular treatment regimen, people with sickle cell disease or thalassemia for whom blood transfusions are one of the only therapeutic options, trauma victims who experience significant blood loss, patients who require surgery, and many others. In fact, a blood transfusion occurs every 2 seconds in the U.S.<sup>1</sup>

Blood is a unique product that can only be provided by altruistic donors who are willing to roll up their sleeves and give of themselves to help someone in need. Blood is a living substance with a short shelf life, which means a continuous supply of donations is essential to ensure that, when a patient needs blood, it is always available.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://americasblood.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Whitepaper-National-Stats\\_5.22.pdf](https://americasblood.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Whitepaper-National-Stats_5.22.pdf)

While 62 percent of the U.S. population is eligible to donate, only about 3 percent of the U.S. population donate blood each year<sup>2</sup>. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated changes to the way blood is collected. In Michigan and across the country, we have seen a decrease in the number of blood drives hosted at schools and workplaces. Centers are increasingly reliant on individual blood donors coming into fixed blood donation sites. As a result, at various times, blood supply in Michigan has been well below the levels widely agreed as necessary to handle emergencies requiring blood centers to seek blood products from outside of Michigan to fill in the gap.

It is important to remember that, while we talk about the nation's blood supply, the blood supply truly is local. The blood collected here in Michigan largely remains in Michigan to

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<sup>2</sup> [https://americasblood.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Whitepaper-National-Stats\\_5.22.pdf](https://americasblood.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Whitepaper-National-Stats_5.22.pdf)

transfuse into patients in Michigan. There is some blood from other blood collectors that is available to be imported, but this is contingent on those blood collectors having a surplus. While the majority of community blood centers are able to meet local patient needs, increasingly, fewer centers are able to collect more than their local communities require. This puts states like Michigan in jeopardy because of its reliance on imports to meet demand.

Unfortunately, the donor base is aging, with nearly 60 percent of blood donations coming from individuals over 40, and nearly 45 percent come from individuals older than 50.<sup>3</sup> And we are seeing concerning decreases in donations from young adult donors, between 2017-2019, there was a 15.1% decrease in donations from 19-24-year-olds. This lack of

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<sup>3</sup> ['Post-Millennial' Generation On Track To Be Most Diverse, Best-Educated | Pew Research Center](#)

donation at younger ages is a concerning indicator for whether these individuals will donate later in life at a rate sufficient to replace donors in aging generations. Outside of demographics, blood centers nationally have experienced a decline of 22% in the total number of first-time donors from 2019 to 2022<sup>4</sup>. This trend is seen throughout the country and is a concerning indicator of the future availability of blood sufficient to meet patient needs.

The tax credit in HB 4068 gives promise to change this trend here in Michigan. We have seen tax credits focused on incentivizing businesses drives in other states help blood centers schedule blood drives and bring in necessary blood donations. However, HB 4068 is different in an important way: it is in line with the changing way blood collection is occurring, at the level

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/blood-providers-respond-to-decline-in-rate-of-first-time-donors-301704739.html>

of the individual instead of the business. You have the opportunity to incentivize Michiganders to take part in caring for their community by donating blood.

I ask that you join me in supporting HB 4068 so that it can advance to a vote by the Michigan legislature. We applaud Rep. Hood and Rep. Green for their leadership in proposing HB 4068, and ask that you vote to help blood centers save the lives of Michiganders.