

**Mutsuko Holiman, RN**

159 Main Street

Plaistow, NH 03865

[Mutsuko39@aol.com](mailto:Mutsuko39@aol.com)

603-819-1245

Dear Chairman,

My name is Mutsuko Holiman. I am a nurse in NH, past board member of the National Marrow Donor Program and an advocate for the patients in need of Blood Stem Cell Transplantation. As a sibling of a sister with leukemia 20 years ago, I experienced first hand the critical need for a stem cell source to save my sister's life. She was fortunate to have my mother as a perfect donor match. Our family set out to start our very first bone marrow donor registry in Japan which is now led by the Japan Marrow Donor Program. Soon we discovered that the adult stem cell source found in registries did not always meet the needs of those with antigens that are hard to find.

Tens of thousands of individuals in the United States are diagnosed with diseases which require a bone marrow transplant as a life-saving therapy. Many of these individuals are children and young working people in the prime of their lives. In the case of children, almost 80% of those treated with a bone marrow transplant can survive while these diseases were uniformly fatal only a few decades ago. Unfortunately only one out of ten individuals with such a treatable disease has a family member who is sufficiently "matched" biologically for a transplant. The remainder of patients must seek a matched donor from the 4 million people who are on the National Marrow Donor Program registry. Because there is an extreme diversity of biological type (HLA type) among individuals, it is often difficult for a patient to find a match, even among the 4 million donors. This is particularly true among individuals from minority groups who are not as well represented on the registry. There is still a pressing need to continue recruiting individuals as donors, particularly those with HLA types not well represented on the current registry.

When an individual patient cannot find a match from the registries world wide, he/she could turn to cord blood as another option. Cord blood is rich in stem cells and has been found to be effective in use for stem cell transplantation. 20% of current unrelated transplants are done using cord blood. It has saved hundreds of patients with blood related diseases thus far, many of them, small children. Cord blood collection does not involve any invasive procedures for the donor and more could be readily collected if there were more education and the facilities available to do the collections.

If there were more cord blood banks and the collections centers were more available, more patients would benefit from receiving stem cell transplantation in a timely manner and would not have to wait for drives to find his or her donor. I witnessed a little boy's life fade away because he did not have the chance to receive his transplant in time.

Please support this Cord Blood Bank Bill- HB 7158. With this bill in place, your State will save more lives of those who are currently suffering.