

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT
OF RAISED BILL # 5631

February 28, 2008

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing to express my support for house bill number 5631. I truly hope you will approve this bill. The long-term effect will be a tax increase for the state of Connecticut. I have been told that the cost of the tax savings is about \$500 per person. Currently there are fewer than 100 living donors in Connecticut each year, so the cost to the state of this is very small. The fact that this tax savings might make people consider being a living donor is huge benefit in many ways! Not only will it give someone a second chance to live there own life, it will give them a second chance to become a productive tax paying citizen again!

I will share my story and my husbands as an example. I am the wife of a liver recipient. My husband Tom Dempsey was diagnosed with an autoimmune disease while in optometry school. His disease targeted his liver. He temporarily left optometry school due to his illness but once the right medicines were found he was able to finish school in 1991. He went on to practice for several years while his liver was deteriorating. He tried to live as normal a life as possible. We joked about knowing all the emergency rooms everywhere we went because his body was failing pretty severely before his transplant. He became so sick, he often had to wear a mask while seeing patients to protect himself from them and occasionally his legs would give out and he would fall. Eventually, Tom was not able to practice full time or drive safely to his practice and he had to cut back and find temporary part time work closer to home. Luckily, a wonderful family decided to donate a liver that matched before it was too late for him. That beautiful day was February 2, 1996!

Since that day, he has gone on to start two growing eye care practices in Hebron and Colchester Connecticut. He employs 10 people and gives the absolute best care he can to many. He has gone on to save other people lives in his practice and through the volunteer work that he does. I manage the office and I see the very, very large amount of taxes we now pay to the state and to Hebron and Colchester as a small business in Connecticut.

My husband's story is the only one I know firsthand. I know there are many other amazing stories out there. I believe that when forced to watch your life slip away and then being given another chance to live causes humans to do some pretty amazing things. The continual effects are fantastic for everyone and will continue to boost the income in our great state.

Please consider voting yes. This will save the state money in the long run and cost so very little in the short run.

Thank you for your consideration,

Wendy Dempsey
A very lucky wife!