New England Organ Bank

One Gateway Center, Suite 202
Newton, MA 02458

24-hour number: 800/446-NEOB
Office number: 617/244-8000
Fax number: 617/244-8755

March 16, 2009

Senator Jonathan A. Harris
Representative Elizabeth B. Ritter
Co-Chairs
Public Health Committee
Room 3000
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Senator Harris and Representative Ritter:

I write in support of raised bill 6677, AN ACT CONCERNING ANATOMICAL GIFTS.

Bill 6677 is an important update to Connecticut's Uniform Anatomical Gift Act (UAGA). Previous versions of the UAGA (1968 and 1987) were adopted by Connecticut and played a critical role in creating a system that allowed the people of Connecticut to become organ and tissue donors and in making life-saving transplants available to those in need.

The new version of the UAGA, as proposed, would bring the state's existing statute up-to-date and would clarify the process by which individuals become donors.

Some key provisions:

- Prioritize "health care agents" as donation decision makers consistent with the agents' priority as decision makers in other health related choices.
- Clarifies the consent process by enabling a "majority of a class" to decide.
- Harmonizes Connecticut's Anatomical Gift Act with federal law, current technology and medical practice, and advance medical directives.
- Provides for more uniformity of practice across states and regions (particularly important in that both Organ Procurement Organizations serving Connecticut also operate in other states).
- The bill maintains the important provisions of existing Connecticut law that are already working well (i.e. Connecticut Donor Registry).

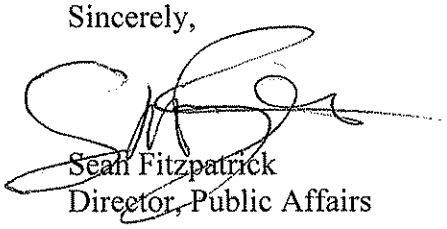
Connecticut already has adopted some of the key provisions of the new UAGA in 2004 when it passed legislation creating the Connecticut Donor Registry through the

Department of Motor Vehicles which empowered individuals to make their own donation decision and to have the decision respected upon their death.

The adoption of the new UAGA will help continue Connecticut's efforts to make the act of becoming a donor easier for those who wish to make the decision to Donate Life.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Sean Fitzpatrick
Director, Public Affairs