

**Written Testimony of  
Cheryl A. Edwards**

**March 7, 2012**

**In Support of House Bill No. 5333  
Public Health Committee**

**Testimony in support of HB 5333,  
An Act Concerning Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness**

Dear Representative Ritter, Senator Gerratana, and members of the Public Health Committee,

I appreciate the opportunity to submit this written testimony in support of House Bill # 5333.

I am Cheryl Edwards, a nurse. I am privileged to work every day with families whose lives are affected by Organ and Tissue Donation. The families I meet, and work with, have the incredible ability to look past their intense grief – to think of saving other families from that same pain.

Picture, in your mind, for one second – the most important, beloved person in your life and your heart. Now blink your eyes once or twice and imagine, in that short time, they are gone forever. Your life, as you know it, will never be the same. If this were your reality, you would likely NOT be able to think clearly, and decision making would become a blur. You can escape the raw pain of this brief, painful thought. They cannot.

This is what each of these families has been faced with at some point in their lives. Many of them were lucky enough to know their loved one's wishes about organ and tissue donation, so that their decision is simple – to honor that wish and support their loved one's final act of kindness.

For those families who have never discussed or considered donation, the decision is understandably much more difficult. What if I say yes and they would have said no? What if I say no and they would have said yes?

This added burden of indecision at such a difficult time is unnecessary. It can be alleviated through increased public awareness and education about Organ and Tissue donation. Through the extensive efforts of Donate Life Connecticut, more and more people can make their own informed decisions about donation and share that decision with their families.

Your support through this legislation will not only provide solace to innumerable families facing tragedy every day, but will transform the hopes and dreams of a life saving transplant into reality for many very grateful organ and tissue recipients.

This can only happen by educating more people about the facts. The Donate Life organization needs and deserves your support through this legislation.

I very much appreciate and thank you for introducing and supporting this legislation.

*Sincerely and Respectfully,*

*Cheryl A. Edwards RN MSN CCRN CPTC  
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