

March 7, 2012

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

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

I appreciate the opportunity to submit this written testimony regarding House Bill # 5333. My name is Danielle Daley, and I am representing the End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) Network of New England. Our agency holds the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) contract to facilitate the improvement of health care and quality of life for individuals who have chronic renal insufficiency and those treated with dialysis or transplantation in the New England States. We are one of the founding agencies of Donate Life Connecticut. The Network of New England is an active member of Donate Life Connecticut, and proud of the accomplishments of the organization.

The ESRD Network of New England and Donate Life Connecticut have similar goals - to promote transplantation. A key strategy for increasing the number of transplants that saves lives is to increase the organ and tissue donor registry. As of December 31, 2011, there are 12,686 patients receiving dialysis treatment in New England, of which 3,764 are Connecticut residents. A kidney transplant offers the best long-term quality of life for those suffering renal failure. Currently, there are 3,414 people waiting for a kidney transplant in New England with 1,053 waiting in Connecticut alone. The wait for a transplant can be long, because there are not enough deceased donors. Many patients will die waiting. For this reason, House Bill No. 5333: *An Act Concerning Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness* should be passed by the legislature of Connecticut. The benefits are twofold:

- **More lives will be saved.** The expertise of an advisory committee, with stakeholders such as the Department of Motor Vehicles, Public Health Commission, Organ Procurement Organizations, Transplant Centers, a donor family member, transplant recipient and living donor, will guide statewide efforts to foster education and awareness about the importance of being a registered donor.
- **Outreach will be strengthened.** Establishing an Organ and Tissue Awareness Fund would provide financial stability to stakeholders for addressing the critical need and disparity of available organs and tissues for transplantation, and accelerate Donate Life Connecticut's goal to ultimately increase the number of registered donors.

Thank you for considering this very important bill.

Respectfully submitted,



Danielle R. Daley, MBA
Community Development Coordinator
ddaley@nw1.esrd.net