

# New England Organ Bank

*A Donate Life Organization*



March 7, 2012

Senator Terry Gerratana  
Representative Elizabeth Ritter  
Chairs - Public Health Committee  
State House  
Hartford, CT 06106

Senator Gerratana and Representative Ritter:

New England Organ Bank supports House Bill 5333, an act concerning organ and tissue donation awareness. The bill would create an effective way to study the causes of the current shortage of transplantable organs in Connecticut and take the necessary steps to address that shortage through education and awareness. Importantly, it would do so without using existing taxpayer dollars from the general fund.

A 2005 poll conducted by the Gallup organization suggests that 78% of the US population is "likely or very likely to have their organs donated," however only about 39% of the driving population in Connecticut have actually registered as donors. There is, we believe, a clear need to promote greater awareness about the life-saving message of donation and the easy ways in which to register as a donor.

Specifically, the bill would be helpful in a number of important ways:

- 1) The bill would create an Advisory Council on Organ and Tissue Donation Education and Awareness dedicated to the mission of increasing donor registration.
- 2) The bill would allow the DMV to include on automobile registration forms the option for customers to donate two dollars to an organ and tissue donation awareness account to provide financial support for donor awareness projects in the state as the advisory council recommends.
- 3) The bill would dedicate a portion of the awareness fund dollars to the state DMV to offset the cost of establishing the two dollar check off – minimal costs most likely related to computer coding.

Each year, over 6,000 patients awaiting an organ transplant die while waiting. It is our hope that legislation such as House Bill 5333 would go a long way in saving the lives of those in need and ending deaths on the waitlist here in Connecticut. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sean Fitzpatrick".

Sean Fitzpatrick  
Director, Public Affairs