

**Written Testimony of  
Mr. Michael L. Luongo**

**3/7/12**

**In Support of House Bill No. 5333**

**Public Health Committee**

**Testimony in Support of HB 5333**

**An Act Concerning Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness**

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.

My name is Michael Luongo. I have been a volunteer for Donate Life Connecticut for a number of years. I am writing in support of House Bill # 5333. This legislation will increase opportunities to educate the residents of Connecticut on the importance of organ and tissue donation.

I know, firsthand, the pain of living with failing organs and the joy of receiving the “Gift of Life.” I was born with a birth defect, which left my kidneys scarred and damaged. From very early in my life, I only had 40% kidney function and doctors told my family that they would only decline from there. My kidney disease caused my body to become run down. I was forced to take a medical leave from my job, give up hobbies that I love, and end up on dialysis. On February 19, 2003, I underwent a successful kidney transplant. This transplant, not only improved the quality of my life, but it may have saved my life, as well.

My transplant has allowed me to return to a very active life. I, now, have my own private practice. I work as a licensed professional counselor. I enjoy playing softball and have competed in the National Transplant Olympics. I also enjoy singing in my church’s choir.

Presently, Connecticut has about 40% of its residents registered as organ and tissue donors. The national average is 42%. I know that Connecticut is not just average and that we can do better. I want to thank you for introducing this life-saving legislation. I know that it will have a positive

impact on the lives of more than 1,200 Connecticut residents waiting for the “Gift of Life.”

Thank you,

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Mr. Michael L. Luongo