

**Written Testimony of
Peter Loss**

March 3, 2015

**In Support of House Bill No. 6281
Public Health Committee**

**Testimony in Support of House Bill No. 6281
An Act Concerning a Fund to Promote Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness**

Representatives Albis, Riley, and Members of the Public Health Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to support House Bill No. 6281.

My name is Pete Loss, I am a volunteer with Donate Life Connecticut, and a caregiver and spouse to an organ recipient. I am an organ donor. I testified before this committee in 2012 in support of House Bill No. 5333.

My wife Maria received a double lung transplant in 2008, after suffering for many years with Alpha 1 Antitrypsin Deficiency, a genetic lung disorder. The lungs she received literally saved her life. She just celebrated her 7 year post transplant anniversary, and is living a full life with family, exercising, travelling, and thanking the donor family each day. I like to say she didn't just receive a transplant, our whole family did.

My family is so grateful to the donor family's courage to make such a difficult decision at such a sorrowful time. Maria would not have survived without it.

Over 1 million citizens in CT are registered donors, putting us at the national average of about 40% registration. DMV, Donate Life, and other organizations have worked hard to register donors. While these efforts place us in line with other states, it's not enough. About 1200 adults and children in CT are waiting to be fortunate enough like Maria to receive the gift of life. Many will die without it.

I urge the Committee to pass this bill, establishing a voluntary checkbox to fund organ donation awareness and registration around the state. As part of the Donate Life effort to increase registration, Maria regularly visits the Old Saybrook DMV office and witnesses the wonderful effort of DMV staff to ask clients whether they wish to be an organ donor. Please help them do more so we can reach more citizens who urgently need organs and tissue.

Each single donation saves and helps so many, with lungs, liver, heart, cornea, skin, and more. While I know it takes a tragic loss to be able to donate, so many more could see the miracle that my family has witnessed. Please make sure other Connecticut families like ours can be saved with the increased registration your vote for this bill will bring.

Peter and Maria Loss, 48 Spring Rock Rd., East Lyme, CT 06333