



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

WEXNER MEDICAL CENTER

March 4, 2019

The Honorable Tom Brinkman, Jr.
Chairman
Ohio House Insurance Committee
77 South High Street, 11th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairman Brinkman, Vice-Chair Antani, Ranking Member Boggs, and Members of the House Insurance Committee:

On behalf of The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center (OSUWMC), I write in support of H.B. 41, Representative Hambley's and Representative Hicks-Hudson's legislation to protect living organ donors from insurance discrimination.

One of the nation's leading academic medical centers, OSUWMC offers healthcare services in virtually every specialty and subspecialty in medicine. Thousands of patients come to us each month for treatments and services they can't find anywhere else. Providing access to healthcare information is central to our research, education and patient care mission. At OSUWMC, we are dedicated to improving health in Ohio and across the world through innovation in research, education and patient care.

I direct our Comprehensive Transplant Center, which has been providing exceptional care for organ transplant patients for more than 50 years. As central Ohio's only adult comprehensive transplant center, we have performed more than 9,700 solid organ transplants. We are 15th in the country by number of transplants performed and in the top 10 percent for number of kidney transplants. We are above the national average in all transplant patient survival rates, and we are "Best in Ohio" for heart and liver transplant survival rates.

Transplant-suitable organs are always in critically short supply. At any time, there are approximately 115,000 people in need of an organ transplant. Annually, 8,000 die waiting their turn. Our team is working hard to advance organ profusion, the ability to rehabilitate organs that once were considered unusable. But we also work to advance the use of living donor organ transplants.

As major academic medical center, Ohio State has the resources, the commitment and the capability to identify matches and make the most of every gift of organ donation. We have completed several chains of paired kidney donation surgeries, including two with six donors and six recipients, which are the largest chains performed in Ohio. Also, patients needing a liver transplant now have another option at Ohio State – receiving a portion of a liver from a living

donor. The liver is the only organ that can regrow, and our technological advances now allow the possibility of a partial liver transplant.

This legislation is critical to ensure that one potential barrier for individuals deciding to become a living organ donor is removed. Living donors should not have to be concerned that they could be denied disability, life insurance, or long-term care insurance solely because they are a living donor. By protecting living donors in this way, you may encourage additional individuals to make the life-giving choice to become a living donor.

I commend the sponsors of the legislation for recognizing the importance of protecting living organ donors. I encourage the committee's favorable consideration of H.B. 41.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kenneth Washburn". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kenneth Washburn, MD
Executive Director, Comprehensive Transplant Center
Director, Division of Transplantation Surgery