



November 17th, 2020

Chairman Green and Members of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee—

On behalf of the organizations above, we are writing to express our support for the substitute bill (L_133_0259-2) under consideration for House Bill 125. We appreciate the work of the bill sponsor and proponents in working to craft this important legislation.

The goal of HB 125 is to increase the number of organ donors in Ohio. The benefits of this are self-evident and our organizations strongly support organ donation, especially its impact on the vision health of Ohioans. Much of the work done to promote organ donation in Ohio is facilitated by the Second Chance Trust Fund (SCTF), which is administered by the Ohio Department of Health (ODH). SCTF is funded primarily by voluntary contributions made by individuals when obtaining or renewing a driver's license or related identification card as well as purchases of the *Donate Life* license plate.

Under the substitute bill, the voluntary contribution levels for individuals would be increased to generate additional revenue for outreach and awareness activities. Additionally, Ohioans will be asked about becoming an organ donor when they register or renew a motor vehicle registration. Ohioans are already asked about organ donation when obtaining their driver's license, however we feel additional points of inquiry will lead to more Ohioans becoming donors. More donors means more lives saved by organ donation.

We also want to commend Representative Koehler for his willingness to work with stakeholders to find a strong compromise that will benefit Ohioans in need of organ transplants. There was some initial concern that earlier versions of HB 125 would have potentially harmed the Save Our Sight Fund (SOSF), another ODH-administered program that is funded by voluntary contributions made during a motor vehicle registration. Thankfully, this substitute bill address those concerns completely and will have an immediate and positive impact once enacted.

Both the SCTF and SOSF are voluntary programs that have had an extraordinary impact since their creation more than two decades ago. They are national models for life-saving public health and awareness initiatives and have benefited many Ohioans.

In closing, it is our hope that the committee will quickly adopt the substitute bill and advance HB 125 without delay. This is an opportunity to save lives and we are grateful for your support of this important measure.

Sincerely,

Sherry Williams
President and CEO
Prevent Blindness Ohio

Keith Kerns, Esq.
Executive Director
Ohio Optometric Association

Todd Baker
Executive Director
The Ohio Ophthalmological Society

Julie Racine, PhD
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Cc: The Honorable Kyle Koehler, State Representative