



Senator Steve Huffman
5th District
Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee
May 20, 2020
Senate Bill 267

Chairman Burke, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity today to present sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 267.

Senate Bill 267 will designate August as "Bone Marrow Donation Awareness Month" to encourage bone marrow donation, ensure that all patients have an equal chance of finding a match regardless of racial or ethnic background, and bring awareness to the incidence of blood cancer and other blood disorders.

Every three minutes someone is diagnosed with a blood cancer or a blood disorder such as leukemia, lymphoma, or aplastic anemia. Seventy percent of all patients who need a bone marrow, peripheral blood stem cell, or cord blood transplant do not have a matched donor in their family. To assist in finding these unrelated donors, in 1987, the United States Congress authorized the establishment of a national registry of volunteer bone marrow donors, the National Marrow Donor Program, now known as Be The Match. This has facilitated nearly 100,000 marrow and umbilical cord blood transplants. Although Be The Match operates the world's largest and most diverse registry of potential bone marrow donors, including more than 20 million potential donors and 295,000 cord blood units, this is not enough to meet the need of all patients.

Given the current composition of the registry, the likelihood of finding a match for a patient in need of a transplant ranges from 23 to 77 percent, depending on the patient's racial or ethnic background. The bone marrow donor registration process only takes a few minutes and requires a simple cheek swab. There is a need to enhance the understanding of how bone marrow donation delivers cures and to encourage residents of Ohio to join the registry.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 267, and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.