

79TH HOUSE DISTRICT

PARTS OF CLARK COUNTY

INCLUDING: SPRINGFIELD, NEW CARLISLE,
SOUTH CHARLESTON, AND ENON

COMMITTEES

CHAIR: AGRICULTURE & CONSERVATION
PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION



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State Representative Kyle Koehler Ohio House of Representatives

Chairwoman Kunze, Vice Chair Reineke, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Transportation Committee, thank you for allowing me to give sponsor testimony on House Bill 21.

In our country, hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children are waiting for a life-saving organ transplant so they can have a second chance at life. Twenty of them will die today. The Second Chance Trust Fund (also known as SCTF) was established in 1997 to support projects that raise awareness for the importance of organ, eye and tissue donation throughout the state.

HB 21 does three simple things:

- First, it directs the BMV to increase the number of times the deputy registrar asks an individual if they would like to become an organ donor.
- Second, it increases the amount a person is asked to voluntarily donate from \$1 to \$2 when they are applying for or renewing their driver's license.
- Finally, it increases the annual contribution for the "Donate Life" license plate from \$5 to \$15. Again, this is a voluntary decision by the citizen renewing their license plate. This will only increase the amount Ohioans pay for the plate, it does not require additional dollars from Ohio tax revenue.

Today I am wearing a lapel pin associated with the Green Chair Campaign, which pays tribute to the many people affected by organ, eye and tissue donation - including recipients, donor families, those waiting for a transplant, and the families of those who died waiting. I would like to share my personal experience as one of the donor families represented by this pin.

In January of 2013, my family suffered a significant loss. My brother Kurt, who was 54 years old, an avid snow skier and someone I looked up to - suffered a massive heart attack. By the time Kurt arrived at the hospital, there was very little the doctors could do. His brain had gone far too long without oxygen, and after consultation with his doctors, we realized he would not recover.

During this incredibly dark time, the one spark of light came when the doctors told us that Kurt had chosen to be an organ donor and was eligible to donate. We realized that, in death, Kurt could provide hope and life to others.

My brother's altruistic decision positively influenced the lives of dozens of people waiting for life-saving organ transplants, and my sister-in-law has had the chance to meet some of those individuals who received her husband's organs. Kurt changed the lives of others because he made an informed choice.

Many people are not aware of their organ donor status, and others might be reluctant to register as organ donors because of misconceptions about what being an organ, eye, or tissue donor entails. Money from the Second Chance Trust Fund is used to ensure all Ohioans have the information they need to understand and make an educated decision about donation.

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Some of the awareness-building projects sponsored by this fund have included:

- A Driver's Education Curriculum regarding organ, eye and tissue donation
- A statewide organ, eye and tissue donation curriculum for high schools
- Many statewide awareness campaigns

With no opponents and the support of many individuals, HB21 passed unanimously from the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee and passed from the House with a 96-1 voted.

I must stress once again; this program is completely voluntary. No one has to contribute \$2 or register for the "Donate Life" license plate unless they choose to. Just like the incredibly selfless decision to become an organ donor.

At this moment, hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children are waiting for a life-saving organ transplant so they can have a second chance at life. Sadly, there are not enough organ donors to meet the growing need, resulting in the deaths of 20 of these individuals each day.

If more people, like my brother Kurt, made the choice to become organ donors, many more lives could be saved. **The Second Chance Trust Fund helps educate folks before they are faced with that decision.**

This bill will allow Ohioans to voluntarily make the decision to support this vital work.

Twenty Americans will die today waiting for an organ transplant. Let's make sure more people are empowered to make educated decisions about becoming a life-saving organ donor.

Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony today. I'm happy to stand for questions.