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Thank you Chairman Willis, Ranking Member Grim, and the members of the House Transportation Committee for allowing Vice Chair Daniels and I to speak in support of HB 367.

According to a recent Lifeline of Ohio Impact Report, there are over 103,000 people waiting for life-saving organ transplants.[1] Donate Life Ohio states that over 3,000 candidates on the organ waiting list are Ohioans.[2] Tragically, Lifeline of Ohio states that "once every 48 hours, an Ohioan dies waiting for a life-saving organ transplant–in the last 10 years, more than 3,500 Ohioans have died waiting".[1] Upon hearing these statistics, I realized how much of a role time plays in safely and effectively getting organs to their candidates.

Under current Ohio law, only ambulances can move organs, tissues, and medical procurement teams with the use of lights and sirens. However, let us consider the primary role of ambulances, which is to service 911

emergencies. Ambulances are called away to assist with life-threatening traumatic injuries that need immediate response. Our office heard from NORA, the Nationwide Organ Recovery Transport Alliance, about situations where surgeons have exited a hospital where an organ has been recovered from a donor only to find the ambulance had been called away to service a 911 emergency. Once an organ has been procured, it can only last outside of the body for a short time, leaving surgeons to scramble to call taxis, Ubers, or Lyfts. As we all know from taking transportation like this, drivers do not always take the most efficient route, nor are they equipped to transport these life-saving materials.

Additionally, even when surgeons can utilize an ambulance, there are safety issues for both the surgeon and organ. Surgeons must sit on benches with no seat belts, where the organ is not securely fastened, often being placed on the floor. This is a concern for all parties involved if the driver must brake quickly or an accident occurs.

Putting measures in place to ensure that organs can move swiftly to the recipient is essential to saving the lives of Ohioans. The bill authorizes flashing lights and sirens to be used on a dedicated organ recovery vehicle, or a DORV. Not just any vehicle can become a DORV, all the following stipulations must be fulfilled:

- being dedicated to or contracted with an organ procurement organization;
- clearly labeled with the words “Organ Recovery Vehicle”;
- Used for transporting human organs;
- Operated by qualified driver

You may ask what makes a qualified driver? How do we know this person is equipped to handle such an important job, not only keeping the surgeon, medical team, and organ safe and secure but also ensuring all others on the road are safe?

It is explicitly stated in the bill that the driver successfully completes the emergency vehicle operations course approved by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration or an equivalent course to be approved by the State Board of Emergency Medical, Fire, and Transportation Services. In addition, the driver must have at least 3 years of experience in the use and operation of emergency lights and sirens.

HB 367 works to remedy these issues and provide a solution to the problems with our current system. I thank the committee for giving us the opportunity to speak on this important bill, and I welcome any questions the committee may have.