

Testimony of the National Kidney Foundation
H.B. 122, to Expand Opportunities for Living Organ Donation
Presented to the Committee on Ways and Means
May 14, 2025

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of the National Kidney Foundation to address barriers to living organ donation and enable more people to receive the Gift of Life through the provisions contained in H.B. 122. We appreciate Lampton's leadership and the support of the cosponsors. I am Megan Haggerty, Development Coordinator in the NKF Serving Central Ohio.

An estimated 37 million U.S. adults have chronic kidney disease, 555,000 of whom are on dialysis, where they commonly face multiple challenges and comorbidities. Quality of Life for a person on dialysis is poor and commonly includes cognitive challenges ("brain fog"), depression, infection, dietary restrictions, anemia, and post-dialysis fatigue, among other challenges. Most dialysis patients are too sick to work, exacerbating financial and personal hardships and a sense of independence. Kidney dialysis has a 5-year survival rate of under 50%, while a kidney transplant recipient has a 5-year survival rate of about 80%. Many kidney recipients live three or four times longer than that.

Kidney disease is our nation's 8th leading cause of death, including 12 people a day who die on a kidney transplant wait list. In Ohio, more than 19,000 people require dialysis and almost 2,200 are on a wait list (395 of whom have endured a wait of three or more years). Last year, 1,293 Ohio residents received a kidney transplant, including 221 from living donors. Living donation has superior outcomes compared to a deceased donor transplant or to kidney dialysis, but only 1 in 4 transplants nationwide are as a result of a living donor. Living donation represents the best opportunity to significantly increase the number of kidney transplants, as only about 2% of annual deaths meet the required criteria for organ donation eligibility.

The creation of a tax credit for employers to provide paid leave for employees who desire to serve as a living donor is a positive step towards removing a significant barrier to organ donation. Living donors should not suffer financial loss or hardship for their selfless act, nor should they have to utilize personal leave or sick leave for their surgery and recuperation. The National Kidney Foundation provides up to 30 business days of paid leave for its employees to serve as a living organ donor, and we applaud and encourage employers to include such supportive policies as an employee benefit.

The National Kidney Foundation commends the Ohio Legislature and Executive Branch for its consistent efforts to remove barriers to living organ donation, including the enactment of a law to protect living donors from discrimination in life, disability, and long-term care insurance, and a law to provide individual tax credits to help offset a donor's out-of-pocket

expenses related to donation. Your support of HB 122 will help address another barrier to living organ donation. Thank you again for your leadership and the opportunity to appear before you today.