



House Bill 188 – Proponent Testimony
Ohio Senate Insurance Committee
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Cleveland Clinic
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Chair Hackett, Vice Chair Romanchuk, Ranking Member Craig, and members of the Ohio Senate Insurance Committee, thank you for allowing Cleveland Clinic to provide proponent testimony for House Bill 188, which would prohibit insurers from discriminating against living organ donors in the state of Ohio. My name is Charles Miller, and I am the Enterprise Director for Transplantation at Cleveland Clinic.

At Cleveland Clinic's Transplant Center, world-class experts perform a variety of adult and pediatric transplantation procedures. Each year, thousands of lives are saved and transformed because of our innovative transplant expertise, which combines quality, excellence and the top transplant physicians and specialists nationally at our Ohio and Florida locations, and Internationally in Abu Dhabi.

The Cleveland Clinic Transplant Center is proud to be a leader in organ transplantation. In 2020, Cleveland Clinic's Transplant Center staff completed 879 transplants across our enterprise locations. This includes a record 629 transplants at our Main Campus in Cleveland, up 5 percent from 2019. We offer one of the most comprehensive transplant programs in the world and perform a variety of transplantations, including for the following: bone and soft tissue, bone marrow, heart, lung, corneas, kidney, pancreas, intestines, liver, uterine, and reconstructive transplants.

Our Transplant Center works closely with Lifebanc, Northeast Ohio's federally designated, nonprofit organ procurement organization (OPO). Increasing organ and tissue donation for those awaiting transplant is one of Lifebanc's main goals. Working with more than 80 hospitals, Lifebanc is responsible for all aspects of the organ and tissue recovery and donation processes, public and professional education programs, and services for donor families.

Additionally, Cleveland Clinic partners with the Cleveland Minority Organ & Tissue Transplant Education Program, a nonprofit organization that works to increase awareness about organ and tissue donation through education and advocacy within minority communities in the Cleveland area. Partnerships like these are of great importance as the need for living organ donors continues to rise.

House Bill 188 would play a key role in the living organ donor process, as this legislation will provide a number of much needed protections for living organ donors. Under this legislation, insurance companies will be prohibited from denying or limiting disability, life insurance, and long-term care insurance to living organ donors. It would also prohibit charging higher premiums based solely, and without any additional actuarial risks, on that person's status as a living organ donor. The protections outlined in House Bill 188 can assure living organ donors that they will not be discriminated against for having selflessly donated to help save the life of another. Thus, these protections may play an important role in recruiting more living organ donors, who no longer will fear these unintended consequences.



House Bill 188 can truly save lives by increasing the number of living organ donors for those patients who are currently on transplant waiting lists.

Again, Cleveland Clinic supports House Bill 188 and urges the committee to be supportive as well. We thank the sponsors Representative Brian Lampton and Representative Jon Cross for introducing this bill and working with interested parties along the way. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.