

Dear Chair Hackett and Members of the Senate Insurance Committee,

I am writing to ask for your support for [Ohio's HB 188](#), Living Donor Protection Act. This bill will protect living donors from discrimination from insurance companies. Currently, insurance companies can raise prices or refuse coverage based solely on an individual's status as a living organ donor. This can deter potential living donors, resulting in fewer living donations and thereby increasing time that prospective recipients spend on the waiting list, lowering their productivity and quality of life and increasing the overall costs of kidney disease to Ohio taxpayers.

As a member of the chronic kidney disease community, I can attest that living donors go through rigorous testing. To qualify as a living donor an individual must be in optimum health. I was on dialysis for 4 years, 8 months, and 3 days before receiving a cadaveric kidney transplant. During that time, I had 3 potential donors. The first altruistic donor passed every test except for the last one. The second donor failed the very first test. The third was undergoing expanded testing, even at the risk of losing her job, at the time a cadaveric kidney transplant came through.

According to a recent study, evidence points to the increased risk of kidney disease in individuals who have received a diagnosis of COVID-19. With this increase in the number of individuals with kidney disease, there is an even greater need for legislation to encourage potential living donors.

Since testing for living donors is so rigorous, insurance companies can rest assured that there is no increased actuarial risk based solely on having the status of living donor. The law should

prevent employers from discriminating against their staff for their altruism. Please support Ohio HB 188 to prevent discrimination against living donors.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jami S. Bell

Of BEDFORD

Reference

Bowe, B., Xie, Y., Xu, E., & Al-Aly, Z. (2021). Kidney Outcomes in Long COVID. *Journal of the American Society of Nephrology*. <https://doi.org/10.1681/ASN.2021060734>