



November 17, 2020

Chairman Green, Vice Chair McClain, Ranking Member Sheehy, and members of the Transportation and Public Safety Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony in support of House Bill 125. My name is Kent Holloway, and I am the Chief Executive Officer of Lifeline of Ohio, one of the four organ procurement organizations serving Ohio.

Since testifying for House Bill 125 at the beginning of this year, we have made changes to the bill in order to reflect compromises that we have made with other interested parties. Today, I ask for your support of the following changes that have been made to the legislation:

- Rather than asking for a voluntary dollar when renewing your vehicle registration, the substitute bill increases the current ask on the driver's license renewal from \$1 to \$2.
- When renewing vehicle registration, the BMV will ask if the individual wishes to be an organ donor
- There is currently a Donate Life license plate that Ohioans can purchase for \$15 per year. The substitute bill increases that amount to \$25, and the contributions will continue to benefit the Second Chance Trust Fund.

We are pleased with the compromises that we were able to make with the other organizations involved with this legislation, and we thank Representative Koehler for his leadership in sponsoring House Bill 125. On behalf of Ohio's organ procurement organizations, I kindly ask for your support of this substitute bill.

As a reminder from my testimony that I gave in February, in the paragraphs that follow there is more background on the details of how the organ procurement organizations operate, and why the Second Chance Trust Fund is so imperative to our work.

Each organ procurement organization (OPO) is designated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to facilitate the donation of human organs for transplant. While we are not federal agencies, our territory is defined by HHS, and our operating standards are set and highly regulated by the Centers for Medicare Services (CMS). Additionally, three of the four organizations recover tissues and corneas for transplant, per contracts with specific hospitals in our designated service areas.

Together as Donate Life Ohio, we worked to facilitate a record number of donations for the third consecutive year in 2019. Four-hundred and sixty-one donors shared the gift of life through organ donation in our designated service area resulting in 1431 organs transplanted. In addition, more than 4,000 individuals shared the gift of healing and sight through tissue and cornea donation. These lifesaving milestones speak to the generous spirit of Ohioans, the important culture of donation and awareness we are building in our communities and the commitment of our state leadership to improve the lives of Ohio residents.

As OPOs, we are responsible for all costs associated with the donation process. To ensure that no opportunity for donation is missed, Medicare-reimbursed hospitals are required to report every death to the OPO in their territory. Consequently, we each operate a 24/7 call center to screen each death for the potential of organ, eye or tissue donation.

When authorization for donation is obtained, our organization is responsible for facilitating the process of donor management in the ICU, testing for function and safety, coordinating the logistics of the organ recovery processes with the hospitals, and packaging and transporting organs to the appropriate transplant center. All of these related expenses are paid by the OPO -- so no costs for the donation are passed on to the donor's family. OPOs are responsible to Medicare for accounting for our costs, and we are required by law to maintain a not-for-profit status.

Approximately 33 percent of all of our costs are "cost reimbursed" by Medicare - which means there is no financial gain allowed. In addition, the federal regulation governing OPO operations excludes reimbursement for public service education about the donor registry and what donation means at the time of death. Without Second Chance Trust Fund dollars, we would not have the means to ensure Ohioans are educated and informed about organ, eye and tissue donation.

Your support of House Bill 125 is critical because while the science of transplantation has enabled thousands of Ohioans to be saved, to have their sight restored and to be healed-- nothing happens without a decision to donate from a generous donor or donor family.

In 2015 the Second Chance Trust Fund conducted a statewide survey with the University of Cincinnati to assess the public's perception of donation and to pinpoint the barriers to donation that needed to be addressed. That survey showed that while 90 percent of Ohioans favor donation, only 60 percent are registered. That 30 percent gap reflected citizens who needed more information to address the common myths and misconceptions that prevent people from registering their decision to donate.

The Second Chance Trust Fund dollars have been pivotal in supporting outreach and education to inform, educate and ultimately increase donation rates in Ohio over the past 20 years.

- Most significant are the statewide media campaigns that have been developed and funded by these voluntary dollars to inform the more than 9 million adults in Ohio. Our public service announcement reach is constantly challenged by the increasing costs of network TV, cable channels and new digital media. With increased dollars, we can expand our reach through the multiple channels required to reach a variety of audiences in an ever-changing media environment.

The fund only receives about \$800,000 - 900,000 annually which is not enough to keep up with advertising costs and to provide adequate reach to the public. This is especially evident in a year like 2020 - when a presidential election campaign and the COVID-19 pandemic complicated media costs, availability and positioning for public service announcements.

- Additionally, Second Chance Trust Fund dollars pay for the printed materials in BMV offices across the state and the educational brochures utilized by all of the BMVs and all the state's recovery organizations. The Donate Life Ohio website and social media pages are also maintained by the Second Chance Trust Fund.

- Educational outreach to youth is another important area that the Second Chance Trust Fund supports with a statewide organ, eye and tissue donation curriculum for high school health classes; as well as video and printed

materials to support an additional curriculum in Driver Education classes. These materials help meet the state mandate for public schools, required to provide education on organ donation as part of the high school health curriculum to encourage family conversations and prepare students to make an informed decision when they get their driver's license and are asked the donation question for the first time.

- In cooperation with the BMV's Information Technology Department, the Second Chance Trust Fund also developed a registration App and provided iPads to all the organ, eye and tissue recovery organizations in the state. This innovation allows us to register more Ohioans easily and securely onsite at events across the state and has served as a best practice nationwide.

Nearly every other day, someone in Ohio dies waiting for an organ transplant that does not come soon enough. Together, we can empower Ohioans to save and heal lives by simply saying "yes" to donation. I could go on about the impact these dollars make on the education of constituents and wellbeing of our state, but at the core it's about empowering Ohioans to make a confident decision that saves and heals more lives.

I ask for your consideration of the difference House Bill 125 can make. I'm happy to answer any questions for the committee. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kent Holloway". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Kent Holloway, CEO

Lifeline of Ohio, Columbus, Ohio