

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 28, 2020

Secretary Alex M Azar II
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Azar,

We are writing to express our support for safe and ethical organ procurement for life-saving donations. While the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) works to update its regulations related to organ procurement organizations (OPO), We respectfully ask that you take into consideration the input of organizations, like that attached from DonorConnect, as well as from healthcare professionals and patients with first-hand knowledge and experience in organ procurement and donation.

Organ donation reflects the American spirit of selfless sacrifice. Americans who elect to donate organs show that they care deeply for the well-being of fellow Americans, literally providing a part of themselves to support the life of another. This is evidenced by a recent event in which the Johnson family from Mapleton, Utah, who tragically lost their twenty-two-year-old son, Caleb, to a car accident and subsequently chose to donate Caleb's liver to save the mother of their son's friend who had become very ill and was without immediate access to a transplant.¹

While we are by no means experts on this issue, any updates to HHS's requirements placed on organ procurement and donation should incentivize continued improvement and innovation, encourage increased donation, provide simple measures based on real world situations and accurate data, and strengthen accountability and transparency. These regulations should not be overly burdensome or threaten the likelihood of Americans selecting organ donation. There is a significant need for organ transplant in the United States with more than 109,000 American men, women, and children on the national transplant list as of September 2020.²

We greatly appreciate your willingness to review and update organ procurement regulations to address inefficiencies in the system and increase the number of organs available for transplant.

¹ Gardiner, Jennifer. "Mapleton man killed in crash was a perfect donor match for friend's ill mom." ABC News. <https://www.abc4.com/news/top-stories/mapleton-man-killed-in-crash-was-a-perfect-donor-match-for-friends-ill-mom/>

² HRSA. "Organ Donor Statistics." (September 2020) <https://www.organdonor.gov/statistics-stories/statistics.html>

We support this effort and encourage you to continue to work closely with organizations, healthcare personnel, and families with direct experience with the system.

Sincerely,



Michael S. Lee
United States Senator



Mitt Romney
United States Senator



Rob Bishop
Member of Congress



Ben McAdams
Member of Congress



John Curtis
Member of Congress



Chris Stewart
Member of Congress