

August 17, 2022

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Chair, Energy and Commerce
Committee
2107 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Ranking Member, Energy and Commerce
Committee
2462 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Anna Eshoo
Chair, Energy and Commerce Health
Subcommittee
202 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Brett Guthrie
Ranking Member, Energy and Commerce Health
Subcommittee
2434 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairs and Ranking Members of the House Energy and Commerce Committee and Health Subcommittee:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations representing thousands of kidney disease patients, caregivers, and living kidney donors, we encourage the Energy and Commerce Committee to prioritize advancing the Living Donor Protection Act of 2021(H.R.1255) and consider the legislation for an upcoming health hearing.

Today, living organ donors face the possibility of having their insurance premiums raised, or even losing insurance coverage altogether, solely for choosing to help save another's life. Potential donors also risk being fired for needing time off from work to recover from their surgeries. These barriers to donation cost lives. In 2020, nearly 6,500 people died while on the organ waitlist.

The Living Donor Protection Act would provide critical security for living donors and allow more people experiencing organ failure to have access to life-saving transplants. H.R. 1255 protects donors from unemployment by classifying organ donation as a serious health condition under the *Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993*. This cost-neutral, common-sense solution would also prohibit life, disability, and long-term care insurance companies from charging higher premiums to living donors.

Every day, 12 people die waiting for a kidney. Living donors are critical to the survival of many with kidney disease. Patients receiving grafted kidneys from living donors have an 85% likelihood of maintaining a functioning transplant five years post-operation, compared with a 72% likelihood for patients receiving a grafted kidney from deceased donors. Living donation not only saves lives and improves health outcomes, but it also costs Medicare less than long-term dialysis. Each year, Medicare spends approximately \$89,000 per dialysis patient and less than \$35,000 per patient per year for those who have received a kidney transplant.

Since the 113th Congress, advocates for living kidney donation have worked tirelessly with federal lawmakers to garner support for and pass the Living Donor Protection Act. H.R.1255 is currently cosponsored on a bipartisan basis by 135 of your House colleagues, an over 30 percent increase compared with the previous Congress session. Additionally, twenty-eight states have passed legislation to prevent discrimination in insurance coverage for living organ donors.

As we approach the end of the 117th Congressional session, we encourage Congress to prioritize the passage of the Living Donor Protection Act; long overdue legislation that would address our country's organ shortage by removing disincentives to living organ donation and save lives.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Alport Syndrome Foundation
American Kidney Fund
American Liver Foundation
American Nephrology Nurses Association
American Society of Nephrology
American Society of Pediatric Nephrology
IGA Nephropathy Foundation
John Brockington Foundation
LifeGift
Living Kidney Donors Network
National Kidney Foundation
NATCO - The Organization for Donation and Transplant Professionals
NephCure
Nonprofit Kidney Care Alliance
OneLegacy Foundation
PKD Foundation
Renal Physicians Association
Renal Support Network
Texas Kidney Foundation
TransplantFirst Academy
Transplant Recipients International Organization (TRIO)
Transplant Trekkers