

**Written Testimony
In Support of SB 751
An Act to Establish an Organ Donor Registry and Public Awareness Fund**

March 27, 2015

Good afternoon Senator Beyer and honorable members of the Senate Business and Transportation Committee— my name is Corrina Patzer and I am the Director of Business Development at Lions VisionGift, the eye bank here in Oregon and a member program of Donate Life Northwest. I am writing in support of Senate Bill 751, an act to establish an Organ Donor Registry and Public Awareness Fund.

I'd like to tell you a little bit about why I am so passionate about this topic and why I think we need to do more to educate on organ, eye, and tissue donation. Each day at Lions VisionGift we get the honor of helping guide many of Oregon's grieving families through what is often their most difficult hour. While over 2.2 million Oregonians have made the decision to register as organ, eye and tissue donors, each day at Lions VisionGift we experience the reality that shows they rarely communicate that decision to their family members. The importance of public education about organ, eye and tissue donation as a means of easing this burden on grieving members of our community cannot be overstated.

Despite the hard work of Donate Life Northwest, along with their member programs and hundreds of volunteers, there is still a large and growing gap between organ, eye and tissue availability and need. Nationally, there are over 123,000 people waiting for an organ transplant. Thousands more wait for the chance to see again or to live without pain through a cornea, bone or soft tissue transplant. Every minute another 11 people are added to the waitlist nationally, and 11,000 people every year die waiting. In Oregon, average wait times can be as long as 2 years.

Revenue earned from this voluntary check box would be used to significantly expand Donate Life Northwest's ability to reach and educate Oregonians about anatomical donation and the option to join the donor registry. Additional revenue would allow Donate Life Northwest to expand its student and community education programs, advertising and awareness efforts, and other campaigns needed to further our vision of ensuring that all people in Oregon and SW Washington who need a transplant, receive one.

The majority of states, including Washington, California, Idaho, Montana, and Utah have successfully passed similar measures, generating significant dollars for donation and transplantation awareness efforts in their respective states.

I urge you to vote to pass SB 751. Passage will empower our fellow Oregonians to make a big difference in the lives of those waiting for transplants as well as their families.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Corrina Patzer
Director of Business Development
Lions VisionGift