

To: Senate Health Care Committee  
Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson, Chair  
Senator Alan DeBoer, Vice Chair  
Senator Lee Beyer, Member  
Senator Tim Knopp, Member  
Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward

Date: January 28, 2019

I am writing in opposition of proposed SB 144. I am very much in favor of anatomical donations, that is, gifting body organs, eyes, and tissue to save or improve lives, or gifting a body for the direct purpose of education and training. My family has benefited from organ donation and I have worked to assure the open, transparent, and ethical improvement to a registry that improves access to Oregonians who will benefit from it. However, this bill is very disturbing to me.

As I read and researched this bill, it does not affect the ability of people to donate directly to OHSU or other universities for the use of deceased donor bodies for education and training. It DOES appear to allow for-profit entities to receive whole bodies as anatomical gifts and then profit from that gift by dismembering and selling body parts. While the donation may be used only for education and training, this bill in essence allows “body brokers” access to a donor registry. I believe that is a misuse of the registry as it now exists and personally, I would remove my donor designation.

In trying to determine the need for this change to current legislation, I had to question who will benefit and why. I have found only one company in our state that is actively working in this area that is licensed in this state and also has national accreditation. I have viewed their website and find a compelling plea to donate bodies for education and research along with information about how many thousands of people across the country are doing so. It is not transparent in letting readers know about the fact that this is a for-profit entity that is often a broker for world-wide dissemination of body parts. When I tried to find out more information about the company there is very little information as it appears to be a private corporation. However, I did find information about a fairly recent FBI investigation. All of this information is on the internet and available widely, not just in Oregon.

I do not believe that this bill is in the best interest of our state. I urge you to reject this bill and not move it out of committee.

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