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A Donate Life Organization

January 28, 2019

Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson
Chair, Senate Committee on Health Care
Oregon State Senate
900 Court St. NE, S-211
Salem, OR 97301

Re: **SB144: Relating to Anatomical Gifts of Whole Bodies – OPPOSE**

Dear Senator Anderson:

As the federally-designated organ procurement organization (OPO) for Utah, southern Idaho, western Wyoming and Elko, Nevada, we are very concerned about the legislation proposed to alter Oregon's Uniform Anatomical Gift Act (Uniform Act). Our mission is to save and enhance lives through excellence in organ and tissue recovery. As an OPO, we partner closely with donation and transplantation organizations across the country, specifically those states closest to our service area, including Oregon.

We find the proposed change to a main aspect of the Uniform Act to be very troubling because the organ and tissue donation system in the United States relies on the uniformity of state laws with respect to authorization for organ and tissue donation. The Uniform Act was first created in 1968, revised in 1987 and 2006, and amended in 2007, with endorsements from every donation industry association, including the American Association of Tissue Banks. Alteration of a core piece of Oregon's Uniform Act, by redefining "procurement organizations" to include "whole body donation organizations", without the endorsement of the Uniform Law Commission, would undermine important work that took place over the course of many years to promote uniformity in the field of organ and tissue donation.

The primary intent of the Uniform Act is to facilitate organ, eye, and tissue donation to save and enhance lives, not to promote whole body donation. While we do support an individual's wish to donate their body after death, it is not a focus of our organization or one within our primary industry. Public trust in the donation and transplantation system is paramount and relies on appropriate oversight, accountability, and consistency within the system. The proposed changes to Oregon's Uniform Act put public trust at risk, run counter to principles upon which the Uniform Act was based, and ultimately potentially jeopardize the availability of life-saving organs for transplantation.

We join others in expressing concern about the proposed alterations to Oregon's Uniform Act. We urge you to support the community and protect the primary principles of the Uniform Act, thereby facilitating the availability of life-saving organs for transplantation. **We urge you to reject Senate Bill 144.**

Sincerely,

Tracy C. Schmidt
President/Executive Director