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To members of the Michigan House Tax Policy Committee,

Gift of Life Michigan is our state's federally designated organ procurement organization, responsible for the recovery of organs and tissues from deceased donors for transplant.

Gift of Life is writing in support of HB4361, which will provide a one-time tax credit of up to \$10,000 for a living donor to recover expenses related to donation. Living donors who donate a kidney or part of their liver or lung to another person are heroes. They deserve our protection and respect. Our hope is that this legislation will remove financial hurdles for anyone considering being a living organ donor in order to save more lives.

Currently, more than 2,400 Michiganders are waiting for a life-saving organ transplant. Of those, 2,000 are waiting for a kidney. Plus, there are more than 22,000 Michiganders with end-stage renal disease. Too many of our friends and neighbors sustain life on dialysis, which is not a cure, and are waiting to live.

Nationally over the past few years, living donation has not increased, hovering around 6,000 to 7,000 annually. This legislation will remove barriers and hopefully increase the number of living donors in our state.

As important as living donation is, the vast majority of transplants come from deceased donation. The growth of the Michigan Organ Donor Registry is one of the best ways to save the lives of those waiting. This bill, along with HB5174, which would ensure that all high school students are educated about donation, will move Michigan more in line with what other states do to save lives through organ donation and transplant.

Changes to public policy are desperately needed to expand both living and deceased donation in Michigan and help us reach a day when no one has to die waiting for a life-saving organ. We urge your support and for the rapid passage of HB4361.

Thank you,

Patrick Wells-O'Brien
Vice President
Communications and External Relations