

Dear Representative Koleszar, Chair of the Michigan House Education Committee,

I am writing in support of HB5174, which would require education about organ donation and the Donor Registry for all 9th graders in Michigan public schools. Neighboring states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, as well as many other states, require education about organ donation. Michigan does not.

As a result, only 21% of new drivers register as organ donors. The root is a lack of education. If Michigan could match the new driver registration rate of other states, we would see another 100,000 young people added annually to the Donor Registry.

Currently, 2,400 Michigan adults are waiting for a life-saving organ transplant. An additional 16,000 Michigan adults linger on dialysis, many of whom would benefit from a kidney transplant.

**I was one of those people.**

**I have received the gift of life three times.** With my three kidney transplants, I have made a difference in the lives of others. I am a Psychiatric Physician Assistant, who also happens to be a Masters level trained Social Worker. I work in the Community Mental Health arena and have the privilege of treating underserved populations who would otherwise often go without care. Each day I am able to give back to the community is because someone had the education and made the decision to say, 'yes'; yes to being an organ donor, yes to giving me another opportunity to live out my wildest dreams, and yes the ultimate gift to humanity. **I cannot stop until the thousands of others waiting have the same opportunities.**

The only difference between an unavoidable death and an unavoidable death that leads to a life-saving organ donation is a "yes." We know that education about organ donation will lead to more yesses and save more lives in Michigan.

I respectfully implore for prompt passage of this important legislation. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sarah Scantamburlo



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