



We honor life through donation.™

May 18, 2021

Representative Bronna Kahle
Chair, Health Policy Committee
Anderson House Office Building
N-991 House Office Building
Lansing, MI 48933

Re: Increasing organ transplants in Michigan via the HOPE Act

Dear Chair Kahle and members of the Health Policy Committee,

I am writing to voice support for changes to the Michigan Health Code that will increase the number of lives saved in our state by allowing our medical centers to transplant organs in accordance with the federal HIV Organ Policy Equity Act, or HOPE Act. This federal legislation allows organs from HIV-positive donors to be transplanted into recipients who are also HIV-positive.

At Gift of Life Michigan, the state's organ and tissue donation program, we already recover organs from HIV-positive donors under the HOPE Act. But because of outdated language in the Health Code, we have to send those organs out of state instead of saving patients here. The legislation before you would remove that restriction on transplanting these organs into Michigan patients, bring the state into line with federal law, increase efficiency and give hope to the more than 2,500 residents waiting for this life-saving gift. The Gift of Life Michigan Governing Board and Advisory Board – including representatives of the state's nine organ transplant programs – endorse this effort to boost the number of organs for transplant for their patients.

Gift of Life's mission is to honor life through donation, and one of our key anchors is a push for "one more ...", whether that be one more organ and tissue donor, one more donor registration or one more community outreach event. The full implementation of the HOPE Act in Michigan directly ties into the goal of "one more." Every time someone in our state receives a life-saving transplant that means one less person is waiting, and there is more hope for those still in need. I appreciate your attention to this matter and am happy to address any questions you may have. You may reach me at ddils@golm.org or (734) 922-1094.

Sincerely,

Dorrie Dils
CEO, Gift of Life Michigan

