

Statement of The Hospital & Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania
For the
House Judiciary Subcommittee on Family Law

Submitted by

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Chairman Cutler, Chairman White, and Members of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Family Law, on behalf of the Hospital & Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania (HAP), thank you for the opportunity to share why the Pennsylvania hospital community supports House Bill 30.

HAP represents and advocates for the nearly 240 acute and specialty care hospitals and health systems across the commonwealth and the patients they serve. This includes educating communities throughout the state about the thousands of Pennsylvanians who are in desperate need of a life-saving organ transplant.

In 2011, the Center for Organ Recovery and Education (CORE) asked HAP to join them in helping the nearly 9,000 Pennsylvanians who wait each year for the organ transplants they need—either to give them a second chance at life or to greatly improve the tremendous ailments they face. HAP recognized the arduous challenges confronting these Pennsylvania families, and was quick to participate in this effort. Shortly thereafter, in 2012, the American Hospital Association (AHA) challenged its state hospital association members to become part of the Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) *Workplace Partnership for Life Campaign*—HAP responded to the AHA's call.

Since 2012, HAP has encouraged our members to make organ, eye, and tissue donation awareness a priority. HAP has partnered with the Pennsylvania Department of Health and Pennsylvania's two organ procurement organizations, CORE and Gift of Life in this effort. This work resulted in the Donate Life Hospital Campaign which educates communities about organ, eye, and tissue donation. More than 40 hospitals and health systems have joined the annual HAP campaign. The campaign kicks off during February with National Donor Day, and ends with National Donate Life month each April. As a result of the 2013 HAP campaign, Pennsylvania registered nearly 1,000 new individuals as organ donors. HAP will have data from its 2014 campaign later this summer.

The results of the HAP campaigns have caused HRSA to recognize Pennsylvania's hospital community for the work it's done, and they have asked HAP to serve on a national advisory council to encourage other states in their efforts. The Pennsylvania campaign serves as a model for the country and has encouraged additional states to sign on to the HRSA campaign.

The hospital community's commitment to these individuals waiting for an organ transplant is vital in making sure that these patients receive the life-saving care they need. With proper education on the ease of registration and the benefits of organ donation, thousands are given a new chance at life.

HAP supports House Bill 30 because it builds upon the important work Pennsylvania is already doing to promote awareness about organ donation, and it would make the commonwealth a standard bearer in this area of health care. It will solidify current best practices in the state and fortify the effective working relationships already in place between health care providers and the organ procurement organizations.

Even under the best circumstances, families often arrive at a hospital during very vulnerable moments. House Bill 30 provides the framework necessary to help ease difficult life-changing health care decisions often made under extreme stress. And, the legislation does not interfere with the authority or ability of hospitals to make critical health care decisions about the care a patient needs.

Making the decision to donate a loved one's organs is not easy—in fact, it may be one of life's most grueling. House Bill 30 will help ensure that the process and procedures that go with this decision do not add unnecessary burden to the Pennsylvania families in this difficult position.

In conclusion, HAP strongly believes that increasing education and awareness will result in more organ donors. As such, HAP will continue to provide support for the training of health care providers and provide accurate information about the donation process to the communities of the commonwealth—doing so will result in more donors being added to the list. Thank you again for the opportunity to discuss why Pennsylvania hospitals support of House Bill 30.

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