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**Testimony**  
**In Opposition of SB 144**  
**Before the Senate Committee on Health Care**  
**By Leslie Brock**  
Wednesday, January 30, 2019

Good afternoon Chair Monnes Anderson and members of the Senate Committee on Health Care– My name is Leslie Brock. I am the Executive Director of Donate Life Northwest, and I am here to testify in opposition to Senate Bill 144 relating to anatomical gifts of whole bodies.

Donate Life Northwest was formed in 1975 from a coalition of non-profit organ, eye and tissue procurement agencies to collaboratively increase the local donor pool to save more lives through transplant. As the sole anatomical donation education agency in Oregon, Donate Life Northwest has the responsibility to broadly and adequately educate the public about donation and transplantation so that all Oregonians have the knowledge needed to make an informed decision. We work on behalf of local organ, eye and tissue procurement organizations and transplant centers to grow the donor registry for the state, and ultimately save lives. We also work on behalf of thousands of people in Oregon whose lives have been saved by transplant.

Senate Bill 144 would grant non-transplant body donation organizations access to the registration system currently related to organ, eye and tissue procurement for transplant. It also redefines a “procurement organization” to include “body donation organization”, giving them access to referrals from hospitals to individuals near death.

Senate Bill 144 creates confusion and inconsistency, undercutting the long and hard work of stakeholders who assembled as a team in the development of the Oregon Uniform Anatomical Gift Act, with a shared commitment to the improvement and enhancement of organ and tissue donation, and replaces this with changes to terms understood and applied nationally under the UAGA. The Uniform Anatomical Gift Act unifies state registries throughout the nation. By changing the Oregon UAGA to include whole body donation the Oregon registry would be unlike any other states.

Oregonians that have consented to donation through the current state donor registry have not consented to whole body donation. If this bill were to be implemented we believe there would be a need to wipe the current system, and the over 2.5 million Oregonians that are currently registered would need to re-register consenting to both donation for transplant and whole body donation for education and research. We would be dismantling and reinventing one of the most successful donor registries in the nation. This would lead to a dramatic drop in people registered as donors, which in turn would lead to more lives lost every day of those on the transplant waiting list.

If the term “Procurement Organizations” is redefined to include “body donation organizations” that would give non-transplant whole body entities the ability to approach donor families and offer compensation, in the form of free cremation, for donation, which goes against the very definition of a gift – “a voluntary... and uncompensated transfer”. In addition, offering compensation in any form to families, especially those



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dealing with financial hardship, could incentivize them to forego donation for transplant, thus risking the lives of those on the transplant waiting list.

Furthermore, donor information is stored in a secure database, accessible only to authorized organ, eye and tissue recovery personnel. The law prohibits donor registry information from being shared with any company or government agency. Redefining the meaning of “procurement organizations” would violate the trust that Donate Life Northwest has worked for over 40 years to instill in the public, people who have entrusted their personal identifying information to us and the organ, eye and tissue procurement organizations. This bill replaces the current system that operates with no known challenges with one in which numerous groups could have the ability to access and use information entrusted to the registry to potentially fulfill their commercial interests.

I urge you to vote against moving SB 144 forward. This bill will cause confusion for those Oregonians who are currently registered as donors throughout the state, and will ultimately cause more lives to be lost due to the availability of fewer transplantable organs, eyes and tissues.

Thank you for your consideration, and I’m happy to answer any questions you may have.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leslie Brock". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Leslie Brock  
Executive Director, Donate Life Northwest