



*To: The Honorable Laurie Monnes Anderson, Chair The Honorable Linthicum, Vice-Chair Members of the Senate Health Care Committee*

*From: Heidi Kayser, Director of Donor Education and Outreach MedCure, Inc. Gresham Oregon*

*Position: Support, SB 144 related to whole body donation for research and education*

Dear Members of the Oregon Legislative Assembly,

All anatomical donation programs can be placed into one of two categories based on the needs they serve: transplant and non-transplant. Transplant programs support both life-saving organ and life-improving tissue transplants. Each transplant donor has the potential to provide up to eight organs and up to fifty tissue specimens. Under the National Transplant Act, all organ transplant programs are regulated by the Health Resources and Services Administration. Tissue transplant programs are legally required to register with the Food and Drug Administration and are regulated by the FDA's Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research. Thus, all transplant organizations are subject to government auditors who ensure ethical practices and adherence to current industry standards.

Non-transplant anatomical programs, otherwise known as body donation organizations, exist to facilitate the donation of anatomical specimens for medical research and education. There is no substitute for the human body when it comes to teaching and researching new procedures, treatments, and technologies. Whole body donations save lives.

Each body donor is often matched to multiple research or education programs, allowing them to benefit innumerable other patients and to promote scientific advancement well into the future. Because the materials collected by non-transplant programs are not implanted into humans, they are not subject to the NTA and not regulated by the FDA or any other federal authority. Non-transplant programs are only loosely governed by state health agencies and are not required to follow the same rigorous standards as transplant organizations in areas such as infectious disease testing or quality management systems.

Currently, only seven non-transplant anatomical programs in the US are certified by a nationally accredited organization, the American Association of Tissue Banks. This accreditation is entirely voluntary, but it serves as a strong demonstration by these few programs of their commitment to the ethical treatment of body donors and to the safe handling of donated specimens. National accreditation certification should be mandatory for all anatomical donation programs.

In order to raise the bar on non-transplant tissue banks and to eliminate the potential for "bad actors" to reduce NATBs to the status of "body brokers" the proposed bill would:



- Allow the Oregon government to make certain provisions relating to anatomical gifts applicable to gifts of the whole body as well, and
- Direct the Oregon Health Authority to include body donation organizations in standards and registration systems related to organ procurement, thus ensuring the operations of these organizations remain in accordance with industry best practices.

By not regulating the practices in all anatomical donation, the current law allows for an unacceptable level of risk to the health and safety of the researchers, educators, and medical professionals who help us to advance medical science into the future. Requiring accreditation would also ensure that all non-transplant anatomical organizations trace individuals throughout the donation process and that they treat those who choose to donate with the courtesy their generosity merits.

Medcure respectfully requests the committee to support SB 144 and commends Sen. Monnes Anderson and the committee for giving this legislation due consideration in service to your constituencies and Oregonians from across the state. This bill is critical to the advancement of medicine.

*Medcure*

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