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Written Testimony in Support of HB 2506
To Establish the Organ Donor Registry and Public Awareness Fund

March 30, 2021

Senator Beyer, Representative McLain, and members of the Joint Committee on Transportation. I am Leslie Brock, Executive Director of Donate Life Northwest, and I'm here today to express my support for House Bill 2506, which establishes the Organ Donor Registry and Public Awareness Fund.

Donate Life Northwest has had a robust partnership with Oregon's DMV since 1975. 46 years ago, Donate Life NW was formed from a collaboration among area organ and tissue procurement agencies. That same year, the Oregon Legislature passed a law allowing Oregonians to indicate their wishes to be a donor on their driver's license. Today, over 4 decades later, the number of registered donors in the state has grown to over 2.7 million. About 99 percent of those registered through the DMV.

Despite the hard work of Donate Life NW, our partners, and hundreds of dedicated volunteers, there is a large and growing gap between organ, eye, and tissue availability and the need. Today here in Oregon there are 866 people waiting for a lifesaving organ transplant. Thousands more are in need of tissue and cornea transplants. Nationally, another person is added to the waitlist every 10 minutes, and 20 people die each day waiting. In Oregon, average wait times can be as long as 3-5 years.

Revenue earned from this fund would be used to significantly expand Donate Life Northwest's capacity to reach and educate Oregonians. These funds would enable Donate Life Northwest to provide culturally-appropriate content in many languages to underserved communities, including rural areas, communities of color, immigrant populations, and youth applying for their first driver's license. This increased capacity will get us much closer to our vision of ensuring that all people in Oregon who need a transplant, receive one.

36 other states, including Washington, California, Idaho, Montana, and Utah have successfully passed similar measures, generating significant dollars for donation and transplantation awareness efforts in their respective states. Oregonians already see the DMV as the primary avenue to register as a donor, making a voluntary contribution option a natural fit for those people to help support our efforts to save more lives in the state. Donate Life Northwest has a longstanding, unique partnership with the DMV that no other outside organization has.

Passage of House Bill 2506 would directly result in increasing the Oregon donor registry, making a tremendous difference in the lives of those waiting for transplants as well as their families.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Leslie Brock".

LESLIE BROCK
Executive Director