



National
Kidney
Foundation®

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February 10, 2021

The Honorable Rachel Prusak
Chairwoman
Health Care Committee
900 Court St. NE, H-489
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chairwoman Prusak,

The National Kidney Foundation respectfully thanks you for your consideration of HB 2421, establishing a Oregon Kidney Disease Prevention and Education Task Force.

Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) is an under-recognized public health crisis affecting 37 million adults in the U.S. Astonishingly, over 90% do not know they have it. A full third of the U.S. population is at risk for this disease. Currently, 40,000 Oregonians on Medicare are diagnosed with CKD, with 3,200 on dialysis. While nearly 320 patients received a kidney transplant in 2020, 750 people were added to the waitlist to receive a lifesaving transplant.¹

We can improve the treatment of kidney patients and ultimately improve their quality of life by addressing social and medical aspects of kidney disease, including early detection and awareness, organ donation and transplantation, and the existing health disparities. The creation of a kidney disease task force will begin to address these issues by identifying policy recommendations and helping implement programmatic changes across the state.

Kidney disease is the ninth leading cause of death in the U.S. and is growing in prevalence. The two main causes of CKD are diabetes and high blood pressure, the primary diagnosis in 75% of kidney failure cases. The risk of developing end stage kidney disease (ESKD) among African Americans is almost four times higher than Caucasians. Hispanics are 30% more likely to receive a diagnosis of kidney failure. Asians and Native Americans also have a higher prevalence of CKD. Furthermore, children with ESKD are 30 times more likely to die prematurely than healthy children.

CKD costs the Medicare program nearly \$120 billion annually, not including costs to Medicaid and private healthcare. While CKD is recognized for the costs associated with progression to kidney failure and dialysis, unrecognized CKD has significant impact on outcomes and healthcare utilization, beginning with the earliest stages. Through patient education and early detection of CKD prior to kidney failure, we can slow or stop progression through changes to diet, exercise, medications, lifestyle changes, and effectively treating risk factors like diabetes and hypertension. Additionally, a kidney transplant not only offers the healthcare system significant savings, but also drastically improve a patient's quality of life.

¹ Organ Procurement and Transplant Network (OPTN) and U.S. Renal Data System (USRDS) (2020)



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Please support the creation of a CKD task force to address barriers to treatments and improve the quality of lives of kidney patients, while at the same time reducing the cost of CKD and kidney failure to the health care system. The National Kidney Foundation respectfully requests your support for HB 2421.

Sincerely,

Amy Hewitt
Executive Director
National Kidney Foundation Serving the Pacific Northwest