

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 2, 2024

Chairman Robert Aderholt
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education,
and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

Ranking Member Rosa DeLauro
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education,
and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Aderholt and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As you prepare the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (LHHS) Appropriations bill, we respectfully request that you build upon a commitment to improving our nation's organ procurement and transplantation processes by including \$67 million for the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Health Systems Organ Transplantation program. This investment would support the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network (OPTN) Modernization Initiative—a patient-centered effort enabled and called for by Congress in the bipartisan Securing the U.S. OPTN Act (P.L. 118-14).

Every year, thousands of organs from deceased donors go to waste. Kidney patients are particularly affected; it is believed that more than one in four kidneys are wasted even though data suggest many patients would have benefitted from transplantation of those discarded organs. Organs are wasted due to a variety of logistical and administrative challenges. Owing in part to dated technology and lack of transparency, navigating the transplant system is notoriously difficult for patients and health professionals alike.

There is clear opportunity to improve the infrastructure of the transplant network and increase the number of transplants performed in the United States. Doing so would bring better outcomes for patients and better value to Medicare, which provides dialysis for patients with End Stage Renal Disease while they wait for a kidney transplant. Congress recognized the need for change with unanimous passage of H.R. 2544, the Securing the U.S. OPTN Act, in 2023. This legislation paved the way for reforms that increase transparency, accountability, and competition in the transplant network. Congress must remain active on this issue by overseeing HRSA's implementation of the law and providing the funding necessary to implement key fixes.

Increased investment is essential to build a new future for the transplant system while maintaining service to the hundreds of thousands of patients who will need a transplant this year. This funding will be used to improve tracking of organs in transit, harness advancements in machine learning, data science, and informatics to better match organs to the right patient and address the inequitable access to transplants experienced by minoritized and rural Americans—areas for improvement surfaced in multiple Congressional investigations. These improvements

require funding to increase competition, establish a modernized IT/data infrastructure, allow adequate staffing for oversight and accountability of contractors, and proactively engage patients as end-users, ensuring that a transformed transplant system is built for patients for the first time. Maintaining the existing system while creating a new data infrastructure and governance system will require a sizeable investment. As the United States moves from a monopolistic contract to a competitive, multi-vendor contracting process, an adequate investment is essential to protect against incumbent advantage and entrenched interests. Without this investment, contracts issued by HRSA to support the transplant network may not be sufficient to elicit competitive bids that Congress sought, losing a once in a generation opportunity to bring new ideas into the system.

Providing the requested funding will enable the important reforms unanimously called for by Congress and benefit patients across our nation. Therefore, we respectfully request that you provide \$67 million in FY 2025 for the HRSA Organ Transplantation program.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Larry Bucshon, M.D.
Member of Congress



Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress



Carol D. Miller
Member of Congress



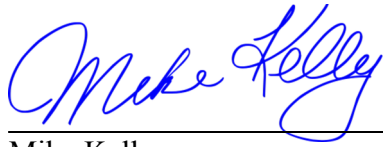
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Don Bacon
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Sharice L. Davids
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Mike Kelly
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Raja Krishnamoorthi
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Katie Porter
Member of Congress



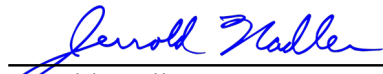
Brian Fitzpatrick
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Jimmy Panetta
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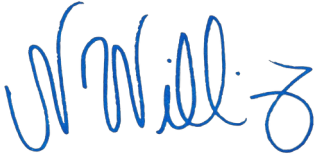
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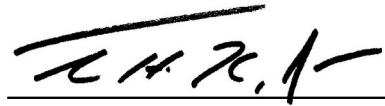
Joe Wilson
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Sean Casten
Member of Congress



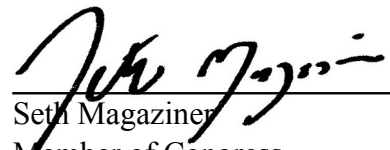
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Scion of the Enslaved
Africans -
Sacrificed to Make America
Great



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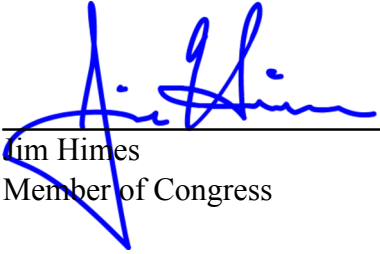
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