



March 11, 2020

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB1133

The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass, Chair, and The Honorable Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk, Vice Chair Health and Government Operations Committee

Chair Pendergrass, Vice Chair Pena-Melnyk, and Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB1133. With over 113,000 men, women, and children across the country waiting for a life-saving organ transplant – including more than 3600 Marylanders, the need for organ donation is great! On behalf of Donate Life Maryland and all those in need, thank you for supporting organ, tissue, and eye donation.

Donate Life Maryland is contracted by the Maryland Department of Health to maintain and operate the Maryland Donor Registry including partnering with The Living Legacy Foundation of Maryland and the Washington Regional Transplant Community to provide comprehensive public education and outreach about organ, tissue, and eye donation and how to register as a donor. Our vision is that every Marylander can make an educated decision about organ, tissue and eye donation.

Over the years, to address this great need for donation, Donate Life Maryland, The Living Legacy, Foundation and the Washington Regional Transplant Community have worked with similar organizations throughout the country in a collaborative effort to improve donation outcomes nationwide. This long-standing culture of collaboration within the donation and transplantation community has improved every aspect of the donation process and helped to develop the current standards of practices that are followed in Maryland and throughout the country.

Conversely, the Maryland RUAGA statute language has not been modified and does not reflect the current donation standards of practice followed in Maryland and throughout the country. Furthermore, the current statute language can hinder the current donation process and cause public confusion and mistrust about the donation.

The language revisions of this bill will address those concerns and ensure that the statute language throughout the Maryland RUAGA statute accurately reflects and supports current organ donation standards of practice followed in Maryland and throughout the country.



To date, 31 states and the District of Columbia have already updated their statute language and many more states, like Maryland, are in the process of making revisions as well.

We thank you for your support of organ, tissue, and eye donation and we respectfully ask for your favorable ruling of HB 1133 - Estates and Trusts - Maryland Revised Uniform Anatomical Gift Act – Revisions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Ford".

Jim Ford

Executive Director
Donate Life Maryland