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Chairwoman Kaiser, Vice-Chairman Washington, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 944, a bill that would increase the amount of tax credits an organ donor can claim in qualified expenses from \$7,500 to \$10,000 and expands the definition of qualified expenses to include child/elder care expenses and the out of pocket costs of any medications associated with the organ donation.

My name is Melanie Kahn, head of state affairs for the American Kidney Fund. We are an independent nonprofit headquartered in Rockville and are the nation's leading organization working on behalf of the 37 million Americans living with kidney disease, and the millions more at risk, with an unmatched scope of programs that support people wherever they are in their fight against kidney disease, from prevention through transplant. With programs that address early detection, disease management, financial assistance, clinical research, innovation and advocacy, no kidney organization impacts more lives than AKF. We are also one of the nation's top-rated nonprofits, investing 97 cents of every donated dollar in programs and have also received the highest 4-Star rating from Charity Navigator for 18 consecutive years, as well as the Platinum Seal of Transparency from Guidestar.

A kidney transplant acts as a literal lifeline for patients suffering from kidney failure, offering the chance for a longer, healthier life. But the severe shortage of available organs from deceased donors in the United States means that nearly 2,500 Maryland residents must wait for someone to die to get a kidney, unless they can find a living donor. In 2019, living donors accounted for less than a third of Maryland's 437 kidney transplants. This bill could help increase the organs available for transplant by eliminating some of the financial barriers that may preclude someone from becoming a living donor.

We believe that eliminating some of these financial hardships for organ donors, particularly while they are recovering from organ donation surgery are not only sensible protections, but also good policy.

For all these reasons we encourage the passage of this legislation. Thank you again for the opportunity to speak with you today.