



ASTS

American Society of
Transplant Surgeons

December 9, 2024

Representative Suzan DelBene

U.S. House of Representatives
2330 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Representative Kim Schrier, MD

U.S. House of Representatives
1110 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Larry Bucshon, MD

U.S. House of Representatives
2313 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Carol Miller

U.S. House of Representatives
465 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Subject: ASTS Endorsement – *Living Organ Donation Reimbursement Program Reauthorization Act of 2024 (H.R. 10282)*

Dear Reps. DelBene, Bucshon, Schrier, and Miller,

On behalf of the American Society of Transplant Surgeons (ASTS) thank you for your leadership in introducing the *Living Organ Donation Reimbursement Program Reauthorization Act of 2024, H.R. 10282*. ASTS is a medical specialty society representing approximately 2,000 professionals dedicated to excellence in transplantation surgery. Our mission is to advance the art and science of transplant surgery through patient care, research, education, and advocacy.

Over one hundred thousand (103,223) Americans are currently on the national transplant waiting list, including 2,066 children. However, there were just 6,959 living organ donors and 16,336 deceased organ donors in 2023. As a result of this critical shortage, 17 Americans die each day while waiting for an organ transplant.

We know that a living donor organ is a patient's best chance for long-term success and improved quality of life and that many people who wish to donate an organ to a loved one are discouraged given their fear of expenses related to donation not covered by insurance, including travel and additional health care expenses. As such, ASTS has long championed efforts to remove financial disincentives to transplantation to address this critical need.

As you know, the Living Organ Donor Reimbursement Program grant program serves a critical role in supporting living donor expenses, including travel costs, lost wages, and dependent care. Funds from the grant program are available through the grantee service program to be used by donors from any state or transplant program. Due to the current legal and regulatory limitations, only 20% of US living donors are able to access the program. This bill could directly impact more donors, and provide more access to transplant for more recipients, by removing constraints on donor income levels and reimbursement.

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We are pleased that the *Living Organ Donation Reimbursement Program Reauthorization Act of 2024* would reauthorize this critical national program and allow more organ donors to receive financial assistance to help cover donation-related expenses. The bill would raise the household income eligibility, which helps more potential donors and takes critical steps toward making living donation financially neutral. The bill also increases the maximum reimbursement level to \$10,000 from \$6,000, with discretion given to the Secretary to keep payments within the budget provided, which helps donors even more.

Thank you for introducing this important legislation to decrease financial disincentives to living organ donation. Living donor financial barriers can induce potential donors to walk away from being donors, which has a tragic impact on those waiting for organs. This bill has tremendous potential to ameliorate the challenges donors face and reduce the medical burdens on patients and financial burdens on the health care system associated with the organ donor shortage. For further information, contact ASTS's Legislative Counsel – Peggy.Tighe@PowersLaw.com – or ASTS' Associate Director, Advocacy & Professional Practices – Emily.Besser@asts.org.

Sincerely,

Ginny L. Bumgardner, MD, PhD
President, American Society of Transplant Surgeons