



American Society of Transplant Surgeons

April 1, 2009

The Honorable Byron Dorgan
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: HRSA Organ Donation & Transplantation Funding for FY 2010

Dear Senator Dorgan:

As the President of the American Society of Transplant Surgeons (ASTS), I am pleased to offer the Society's strong support for your amendment (#33) to the Senate budget bill, S.Con.Res. 13, which would add \$10 million to the FY 2010 budget for Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) organ donation and transplantation programs.

Congress did not provide federal funding for these programs until FY 2009, when you championed a first-ever funding increase for these programs. Just prior to then, the Division of Transplantation (DoT) within HRSA did reallocate existing agency funds to begin funding a new program in fiscal years 2007 and 2008. This program reimburses travel and subsistence expenses for living donors whose low incomes may otherwise prohibit them from being able to donate. Since its implementation in October 2007, this program has contributed to 189 living donations.

Additional funding will not only help DoT fund this type of program but it also helps reduce the lengthy rolls of the organ donation waiting list, generates savings to the Medicare program, and enables transplant programs to expand opportunities for paired kidney donation among multiple intended donors. However, it is simply not possible for the HRSA DoT to achieve more than this modest change without further Congressional support and dedicated funding.

On behalf of the national specialty society representing more than 1500 transplant surgeons, physicians and scientists dedicated to promoting education and research with respect to organ and tissue transplantation so as to save lives and enhance the quality of life of patients with end stage organ failure, we appreciate your leadership in securing these funds earlier last year and fully support your amendment this year to increase funding for the organ donation and transplantation programs of the federal government run through HRSA. Thank you.

Sincerely,

John P. Roberts, MD
President

National Office
2461 South Clark Street
Suite 640, Arlington, VA 22202
Phone: 703 414-7870
Fax: 703 414-7874
Email: asts@asts.org
www.asts.org

President
John P. Roberts, MD
University of California San Francisco
Division of Transplantation
505 Parnassus Ave
Box 0780, Room M896
San Francisco, CA 94143-0780
Phone: 415 353-1888
Fax: 415 353-8709
Email: robertsj@surgery.ucsf.edu

President-Elect
Robert M. Merion, MD
University of Michigan
315 West Huron, Suite 240
Ann Arbor, MI 48103-4262
Phone: 734 936-7336
Fax: 734 998-6620
Email: merionb@med.umich.edu

Secretary
Kim M. Olthoff, MD
University of Pennsylvania
Department of Surgery
3400 Spruce St - 2 Dulles
Philadelphia, PA 19104
Phone: 215 662-6136
Fax: 215 662-2244
Email: kim.olthoff@uphs.upenn.edu

Treasurer
Michael M. Abecassis, MD, MBA
Northwestern University
Division of Transplantation
675 N. St. Clair Street, #17-200
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: 312 695-0359
Fax: 312 695-9194
Email: mabecass@nmh.org

Immediate Past President
Goran B. Klintmalm, MD, PhD

Past President
Arthur J. Matas, MD

Councilors-at-Large
Mitchell L. Henry, MD
Robert L. Kormos, MD
Alan N. Langnas, DO
Richard B. Freeman, Jr., MD
Dixon B. Kaufman, MD, PhD
Timothy L. Pruett, MD
James D. Eason, MD
Charles M. Miller, MD
Peter G. Stock, MD, PhD

Executive Director
Katrina Crist, MBA
Email: katrinacrist@earthlink.net