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1.866.MD.DONOR

**SB577 Maryland Revised Uniform Anatomical Gift Act -  
Donors - Registration by Tax Return Checkoff  
FAVORABLE**

February 7, 2024

Hon. Senator Guy Guzzone  
Budget and Taxation Committee  
3 West Miller Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and Committee Members,

On behalf of Donate Life Maryland and the more than 2,200 Marylanders awaiting a life-saving organ transplant, thank you for your continued support of organ and tissue donation. Our mission is to save and enhance lives by registering organ, eye and tissue donors, providing public education and awareness about organ, eye and tissue donation in Maryland. With our vision to ensure every Marylander can make an educated decision about organ, eye and tissue donation.

As the state-authorized nonprofit responsible for managing the Maryland donor registry, we are honored to work with and support Maryland's designated organ procurement organizations, Infinte Legacy.

In 2007 Maryland established under the Estates and Trusts code §4-516 a contract between the Secretary of Health and a qualified nonprofit who was tasked with establishing, maintaining, and operating the Maryland donor registry. This code also established the corporation between the donor registry and the Motor Vehicle Administration for the purpose of transferring to the donor registry all relevant information regarding a donor making, amending, or revoking their anatomical gift. Since 2007 Donate Life Maryland has been the state authorized nonprofit contracted by the Maryland Department of Health to oversee the Maryland Donor Registry.

This system was the most effective way for donor registrations across the state seeing approximately 2.2 million of the current 2.8 million Marylanders registered across the state. With the implementation of Real ID Marylanders are no longer required to renew their license every two years, moving to every eight year for license renewal. This extended period for renewal removes the donor designation question from people's minds and places the over 2,200 Marylanders currently on the transplant waitlist at a much greater potential for not receiving that phone call. Approximately 2% of deaths which occur can be organ donors, placing Marylanders currently waiting at high risk to not receive their transplant. Due to the several years between license renewals Marylanders are no longer given the option to either opt in or opt out of becoming an organ, eye and tissue donor.

**What can YOU make possible? Register TODAY to be an organ, eye and tissue donor!  
To become a donor visit: [register.donatelifemaryland.org](http://register.donatelifemaryland.org)**



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This bill would enable an individual to designate a willingness to be an organ donor on their annual state income tax return. It would require the state individual income tax return to contain a space for a taxpayer to indicate if they are willing to participate in the Maryland Donor Registry. The tax return would have to include the following statement under that space:

An individual taxpayer willing to participate in the anatomical gift donor registry must complete the donor registry schedule and submit it with the taxpayer's state income tax return.

The instruction booklet that accompanies the annual return would have to include information describing the donor registry program maintained by the state's designated donor registry organization. The information would have to explain the taxpayer's right under the Estates and Trusts Code §4-516 to make an anatomical gift in the event of death and provide the taxpayer with the opportunity to specify on the taxpayer's annual return that the taxpayer is willing to participate and have their name placed on the donor registry.

At a minimum, the donor registry schedule would have to include all of the following information:

- The taxpayer's name, date of birth, and address.
- The taxpayer's Social Security, driver's license, or state ID card number.
- Information describing the donor registry program, including the address and phone number of the states designated donor registry organization.
- A statement that the department will forward the completed schedule to the proper organization for the taxpayer's inclusion as a donor on the donor registry.

By supporting this additional avenue to register as an organ, eye and tissue donor, we can ensure that the over 2,200 Marylander's currently on the waitlist can receive their much needed transplant. This will not only allow those who want to register a way to do so, but also for those who may want to remove their registration a similar route.

We sincerely appreciate the legislature's ongoing support of our efforts and your role in helping us save lives and honor donors, their families, and the very grateful recipients whose lives are changed through organ and tissue donation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa M. Spicknall".

Lisa Spicknall  
Executive Director  
Donate Life Maryland

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