

December 24, 2025

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Chair, Subcommittee on Labor-HHS
Appropriations
United States Senate
170 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Labor-HHS
Appropriations
United States Senate
141 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chair, Subcommittee on Labor-HHS
Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
266 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Labor-HHS
Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
2413 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Capito, Ranking Member Baldwin, Chair Aderholt, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

Thank you for your exceptional leadership in advancing kidney health initiatives through the Fiscal Year 2026 Labor, HHS Appropriations Senate and House Reports. Your commitment to prevention, early detection, research, and system improvements demonstrates the urgent priority that kidney health deserves. With more than 37 million Americans living with chronic kidney disease and over 108,000 patients awaiting kidney transplants, we are grateful for your inclusion of critical initiatives that will transform patient outcomes across the continuum of kidney care.

We especially appreciate your strong bipartisan support for the following initiatives, which reflect the priorities identified as most strongly supported in both the House and Senate reports:

- **Expanding chronic kidney disease prevention and early detection programs through CDC.** We support the continued investment in educating the public about their risk for CKD, educating clinical professionals, and spurring innovation by entities serving the CKD community. The public awareness initiative for advancing American kidney health will improve surveillance, early detection, and treatment to slow disease progression and reduce complications.
- **Advancing CMS chronic kidney disease guidelines and early screening initiatives.** We strongly support ensuring that Medicare benefit guidelines reflect the most recent clinical CKD guidelines and increasing access to early screening utilizing both estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR) and urine Albumin-to-Creatinine Ratio (uACR) testing. These targeted efforts should focus on reaching high-risk populations and individuals who have developed CKD but have not yet reached end-stage renal disease.
- **Supporting robust kidney disease research at NIH NIDDK.** We appreciate NIDDK's ongoing work on kidney disease research, particularly addressing disparities in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of kidney diseases. Enhanced research efforts focusing on health disparities will improve kidney transplant care and advance innovative treatments for all patients facing kidney disease.
- **Investing in innovation via KidneyX.** We strongly support \$5,000,000 for carrying out prize competitions sponsored by the Office of the Secretary to accelerate innovation in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of kidney diseases (as authorized by section 24 of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980).
- **Affirming the importance of the OPTN Modernization Initiative, as highlighted in both the House and Senate reports, to strengthen accountability and the performance of the nation's organ transplant system** We strongly support HRSA prioritizing the development of a modern, dynamic organ candidate matching technology system that better serves donor families and

recipients, performs efficiently, allows for timely, systematic updates in allocation policy, and supports clinical innovation. While we recognize the difficult fiscal climate, we believe that greater investment in OPTN Modernization is essential to meet the evolving needs of patients and health professionals in our organ transplant system.

- **Supporting targeted improvements to organ procurement oversight.** We support the CMS Organ Procurement Organization rule while strongly encouraging CMS to provide further clarification as soon as possible to ensure the rule achieves its intended goals of improved organ procurement outcomes without unintended consequences.
- **Supporting living donors.** We support increases in HRSA's Living Donation Reimbursement Program and share the perspective that many living donors could not have donated without this program.
- **Implementing organ transportation improvements.** We support HRSA's implementation of the Federal Aviation Administration Organ Transportation Working Group recommendations and echo the Senate report's emphasis that performance metrics should not impede access to organs for transplantation. These efforts include establishing forums for stakeholder communication, standardized data definitions, and improved reporting protocols to optimize organ delivery for kidney patients.

These initiatives represent a comprehensive approach to improving kidney health from prevention through transplantation. Your leadership in prioritizing chronic kidney disease prevention, early detection, and research addresses the upstream factors that contribute to kidney failure, while strengthened oversight of organ procurement organizations and improved transportation systems ensure optimal outcomes for patients who do require transplantation.

We respectfully request that you maintain these critical priorities as the appropriations process moves toward final passage. The patient community is counting on Congressional leadership to advance these life-saving initiatives that will reduce suffering and save lives across our nation.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to improving kidney health, advancing research, and strengthening the systems that serve kidney patients. We look forward to continuing our partnership to advance these vital programs that offer hope to patients and families nationwide.

Sincerely,



Tod Ibrahim
Executive Vice President
American Society of Nephrology



Kevin Longino
Transplant Recipient
CEO, National Kidney Foundation