



American Society of Nephrology

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American Society of Nephrology (ASN)

## ASN Endorses Legislation to Protect Living Donors in Ongoing Efforts to Increase the Supply of Organs for Life-Saving Transplantation

*The Living Donor Protection Act will remove barriers to living donation, increasing organ availability and transplant equity. Twelve Americans die every day waiting for a kidney transplant.*

**Washington, DC** – In support of increasing living donation, especially living kidney donation for people with kidney failure, the American Society of Nephrology (ASN) wholeheartedly supports today's reintroduction of the Living Donor Protection Act of 2021. The Act was introduced in the House and Senate by sponsors Representatives Jerry Nadler (D-NY) and Jaime Herrera-Beulter (R-WA), and Senators Kristen Gillibrand (D-NY) and Tom Cotton (R-AR). Increasing access to transplantation—including removing barriers to living donation—is a longstanding pillar of ASN's congressional advocacy.

"ASN commends Representative Nadler, Representative Herrera Beutler, Senator Gillibrand, and Senator Cotton for introducing the Living Donor Protection Act, important legislation that will remove barriers discouraging living donors from providing the life-saving gift of a kidney transplant. ASN is committed to increasing the number of kidneys available for transplant and increasing equity in the US transplant system, the Living Donor Protection Act is a critical first step to achieve these goals," said Susan E. Quaggin, MD, FASN, ASN President.

The legislation builds on the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress' passage of the Comprehensive Immunosuppressive Drug Coverage for Kidney Transplant Patients Act, which extends Medicare coverage of immunosuppressive drugs for patients receiving kidney transplants. The Living Donor Protection Act guarantees that living donors have access to life, disability, and long-term care insurance with full coverage and without higher premiums—a difficulty currently experienced by 1 in 4 living donors—and by codifying that the Family and Medical Leave Act protects the employment of living donors after taking time off to donate an organ. By removing these barriers, this legislation will empower living donors and help countless Americans receive the gift of life.

"Every day, I see firsthand the difference donated kidneys make in the lives of my patients. Yet, currently, living donors face too many barriers to provide this gift of life at a time when donating a kidney is more important than ever: 12 Americans die every day while waiting for a kidney transplant. I applaud the sponsors of the Living Donor



Protection Act for ensuring the ability of living donors to obtain insurance and retain employment are no longer obstacles to organ donation," said Roslyn B. Mannon, MD, FASN, ASN Policy and Advocacy Committee Chair.

Removing barriers to living donation is a critical component to increasing equity in transplantation. Black Americans are 50% less likely to receive a kidney from a living donor than White Americans, and research has consistently pointed to barriers to donation, such as insurability and job security, as factors leading to this disparity.<sup>i</sup> By removing these barriers, the Living Donor Protection Act will increase equity in living organ donation.

ASN has continually called on Congress to pass the Living Donor Protection Act and has made the bill a central feature in its advocacy to Congress, including convening several community-wide advocacy events to support the passage of the bill. ASN joins partner patient and professional societies in the kidney and transplant community to continue successful efforts to increase the number of kidney transplants and pass the Living Donor Protection Act in this Congress.

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<sup>i</sup> Rodrigue JR, Kazley AS, Mandelbrot DA, et al. Living Donor Kidney Transplantation: Overcoming Disparities in Live Kidney Donation in the US--Recommendations from a Consensus Conference. *Clin J Am Soc Nephrol.* 2015;10(9):1687-1695. doi:10.2215/CJN.00700115