

Thursday, April 25, 2013

ASN Supports Legislation to Increase Patient Access to Organ Transplantation

Washington, DC—The American Society of Nephrology (ASN) is committed to enactment of H.R. 698 / S. 323, the HIV Organ Policy Equity (HOPE) Act, and is championing this common-sense, bipartisan bill on ASN's annual Kidney Health Advocacy Day today. The HOPE Act, a scientifically sound, no-cost bill, will increase patients' access to transplantation, saving lives and dollars.

For most patients with kidney failure, transplantation is superior to dialysis from both patient survival and quality of life perspectives. The HOPE Act would help reduce the organ shortage in the United States and increase all access to transplantation for the more than 95,000 Americans currently on the waitlist.

This legislation would end a medically outdated 1980s-era federal ban on the transplantation of organs from deceased HIV+ donors to people with HIV who are on the waitlist. Research shows that lifting this ban could add up to 600 organs per year for HIV-infected transplant candidates. That means patients with HIV could get faster access to a new supply of HIV+ organs—significantly shortening the wait list for individuals without HIV who are currently waiting for a transplant.

ASN appreciates the tremendous leadership of House and Senate original cosponsors Rep. Andy Harris and Rep. Lois Capps as well as Sen. Boxer and Sen. Coburn for this important bill. Enactment of the HOPE Act will make a significant difference for patients and their families who are waiting for the gift of life. ASN is dedicated to collaborating with these lead cosponsors as well as other national kidney, transplant, and LGBT organizations to advance the legislation in this Congress.

Representing more than 14,000 members dedicated to leading the fight against kidney disease, ASN is largest organization of kidney health professionals in the world. Foremost among the society's goals is continuous improvement in the quality, efficiency, and accessibility of care available to the millions of people with kidney disease.

For more information about ASN or the society's position on the HOPE Act, please contact ASN Manager of Policy and Government Affairs Rachel Shaffer at rshaffer@asn-online.org or 202-640-4659.