

Contact Members of Congress to Improve Organ Donor Referrals



Issue

Hospitals are required to notify organ procurement organizations (OPOs) of all imminent patient deaths in a timely manner to ensure OPOs can maximize the number of organs recovered for transplant. It is standard practice for hospital staff to manually determine patients that are indicating an imminent death. Hospital staff then notify the OPOs of those patients, usually by phone.

Hospital staff are busy and have varying ranges of training in donor identification and transplant science, which leaves room for variability and human error when identifying and referring potential donors. Today there are software tools which automate this process, but they have not been studied on a national level.

These software tools, known as automated electronic deceased organ donor referral systems, are used by hospitals to automatically alert OPOs of patients who may become deceased donors. The technology uses hospital electronic health records (EHR) systems to flag patients who are potential candidates for donation and alert the collaborating OPO.

Automating the standard practice of manually notifying OPOs of potential deceased organ donors would lift burden off busy hospital staff, reduce the risk of human error, and ensure every potential donor is referred. Widespread use of automated electronic deceased donor referral could increase patient safety and reduce the number of Americans waiting for a lifesaving organ transplant.

Studying best practices and making informed recommendations for the national adoption of automated electronic deceased organ donor referral is critically important.

Status

Representative Rob Wittman (R-VA) introduced the bipartisan Organ Donation Referral Improvement Act (HR. 9939) in October 2024, co-led by Representatives Jennifer McClellan (D-VA), Jim Costa (D-CA), and Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R-IA). The bill directed Health and Human Services' Assistant Secretary for Planning and Education to study the implementation of automated electronic deceased organ donor referral and make recommendations for best practice and their broad adoption. Representative Wittman re-introduced the same Organ Donation Referral Improvement Act (HR. 330) in January 2025, co-led again by Representatives McClellan, Costa, and Miller-Meeks. It is currently referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

How you can help

Contacting Your Members of Congress

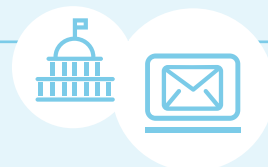
- Identify your Members of Congress

House Representative

- Visit www.house.gov
- Use the "Find Your Representative" look up tool
- Click the envelope icon below your Representative's picture to access their webpage to submit a message

Senators

- Visit www.senate.gov
- Select "Contact" from the "Senators" pull down menu
- Select your state of residence from the pull down menu
- Click "Contact" under each Senator's picture to access their webpage to submit a message



Message to Congress

Dear [Representative or Senator],*

I am a constituent and an organ donation and transplant advocate. (Share your personal story, if you are comfortable.)*

I urge you to co-sponsor the bipartisan Organ Donation Referral Improvement Act (HR. 330), led by Representatives Rob Wittman (R-VA-01), Jennifer McClellan (D-VA-04), Jim Costa (D-CA-21), and Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R-IA-01). The bill directs the HHS Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation to study the implementation of automated electronic deceased organ donor referral systems to improve and expedite the organ donation referral process.

Automated electronic deceased organ donor referral systems are used by hospitals to refer patients who may become deceased organ donors to the collaborating organ procurement organization (OPOs). Currently, it is standard practice for busy hospital staff to manually refer these patients, usually by phone.

Automated electronic deceased organ donor referral systems lift the burden of manual reporting off busy hospital staff, reduce the risk of human error, and ensure all potential donors have the opportunity to donate their organs for life-saving transplants.

If enacted into law, the Organ Donation Referral Improvement Act will help increase the amount of potential organ donors and thereby could be an important tool to help bring the gift of life to Americans waiting for a lifesaving organ transplant.

Thank you for considering this request.

* Highlighted text needs to be completed by the person sending the email message.