

# **HEIN LAW FIRM, CHARTERED**

5845 SW 29<sup>th</sup> Street, Topeka, KS 66614-2462

Phone: (785) 273-1441

Fax: (785) 273-9243

*Ronald R. Hein*

*Attorney-at-Law*

Email: rhein@heinlaw.com

www.heinlw.com

**Testimony re: HB 2386**  
**House Health and Human Services Committee**  
**Presented by Ronald R. Hein**  
**on behalf of**  
**National Kidney Foundation of Kansas and Western Missouri**  
**and Midwest Transplant Network**  
**March 7, 2013**

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

My name is Ron Hein, and I am legislative counsel for the National Kidney Foundation of Kansas and Western Missouri. NKF KS/MO is a regional office of the National Kidney Foundation with a service area of the entire state of Kansas and the western portion of the state of Missouri. Its mission is to assist patients with kidney disease. It fulfills this mission through numerous services including raising funds for research; providing direct patient care and treatment; providing early intervention screenings; providing a camp for children with kidney disease, including kids on dialysis; organ donation awareness and numerous other programs.

I am also legislative counsel for the Midwest Transplant Network, a not-for-profit corporation designated by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) for the purpose of providing organ procurement services to hospitals.

NKF and MTN requested introduction of and strongly support HB 2386, which provides that individuals who donate organs while living may deduct from income taxes, up to \$5,000 of expenses incurred in donating organs to an organ recipient. This bill would be a message of support for live organ donation by the state of Kansas, more so than a true financial incentive for a donor to donate their organs. Although any expenses incurred up to \$5,000 would give the donor a Kansas income tax deduction, even at the highest income tax rate, the amount deducted by any individual would amount to only \$245. However, it would send an important message to those caring and courageous individuals who donate organs to loved ones, and even to strangers.

The fiscal note for this bill should be relatively insignificant, as our data reflects that there were 43 Kansans who donated living organs last year. The fiscal note assuming this level of utilization of the deduction, and assuming the highest income tax rate and a maximum deduction of \$5,000, would cost in the neighborhood of a total of \$10,000 to the State General Fund.

As many of you know, I am also a victim of kidney disease. The source of my disease was Type 1 Diabetes Mellitus, which I have had since I was 14 years of age. In 1978, I was advised by my physician that I had kidney disease, more technically described as End-stage Renal Disease (ESRD). In 1996, my kidneys failed and I went on Continuous Ambulatory Peritoneal Dialysis (CAPD) for 2 ½ months.

My wife, Julie, donated a kidney to me in September 1996. For her to sacrifice one of her functioning kidneys to give me the gift of life was a loving and selfless act. In 2007, her donated kidney was suffering from damage from the immunosuppressant drugs, and I was informed my donated kidney would not last much longer. I was put on the transplant list, and in September 2007, I received both a new kidney and a pancreas from a cadaver donor, thus curing my 44 years of Type 1 Diabetes.

I would like to note that many people in our lives, many you know and many around this Capitol, have generously donated organs to assist others with life-threatening illnesses. I always hate to name some, for fear of leaving others out, but those that you likely know here in the building include, my wife, Julie; Capitol Security Office Steve Crumpler; and Rep. Vern Swanson's wife, Susie.

Thank you very much for permitting me to testify and I will be happy to yield to questions.