

**TESTIMONY OF COLLEEN JAMISON  
IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 2472  
MARCH 6, 2018  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND PUBLIC WELFARE**

Good morning Chairwoman Schmidt, Vice Chairwoman Bollier, Senator Kelly, and members of the Committee.

I come before you today to testify in support of House Bill 2472, which amends Kansas law relating to driver's license and state-issued identification cards. The proposed amendments make it easier for applicants to indicate on their driver's license or state-issued identification card whether they wish to be, upon their death, an organ, eye, or tissue donor in accordance with the revised uniform anatomical gift act.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services<sup>1</sup>, 20 people die each day waiting for a transplant, and every ten minutes another person is added to the transplant waiting list. One organ donor can save up to eight lives, and 33,611 organ donations were performed in 2016.

I have a few people I would like to introduce you to today. The first is Cassie Hickel, the reigning Mrs. Kansas. Cassie's platform is organ donation; in December 2016 she donated a kidney to a man in Iowa she discovered through a mutual friend.

I would next like to introduce you to my husband, Alonzo Jamison. You may remember him from his time playing basketball at the University of Kansas from 1989 through 1992.

As a result of complications from diabetes, Alonzo was diagnosed in 2014 with Stage IV Renal failure and had to begin dialysis. His form of dialysis involved the placement in his abdomen of a catheter system which filtered the toxins in his body, replacing the work of his

---

<sup>1</sup> [www.organdonor.gov](http://www.organdonor.gov)

barely-functioning kidneys. He was then hooked up to a machine for ten to eleven hours a night, every night, which would filter a solution through his abdominal catheter.

Alonzo was one of the fortunate ones. On January 24, 2017, he received a kidney from a living donor, a young man named Shekinah Bailey. The name Shekinah means “the presence of God on earth or a symbol or manifestation of His presence.” I think all will agree with me that this is a fitting name for the man who quite literally saved my husband’s life.

Although I think it is clear that organ donation and transplants saves lives, what may not be as clear is that organ donation and transplants also save money.

When Alonzo was on dialysis, our insurance paid over \$10,000 per week for his daily treatments. In a year and a half of dialysis treatment, that amounted to over \$800,000. Contrast that with the just over \$125,000 paid for his kidney transplant and treatment since and I think anyone would agree that encouraging organ donation encourages cost savings at all levels.

I think it is obvious that the need for donors is staggering. Although 95% of adults say they support organ donation, only 54% are actually signed up as donors. According to the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network maintained by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services<sup>2</sup>, despite advances in medicine and technology, and increased awareness of organ donation and transplantation, the gap between supply and demand continues to widen. While national rates of donation and transplant have increased in recent years, more progress is needed to ensure that all candidates have a chance to receive a transplant.

By making it even easier for people to make their organ donation wishes known, this bill will save money but, more importantly, save lives. I urge you today to pass House Bill 2472, and I would stand for any questions the Committee may have. Thank you for allowing me to testify in support.

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://optn.transplant.hrsa.gov/>