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**GOVERNOR PATRICK SIGNS BILL TO STREAMLINE AND PROMOTE ORGAN DONATION PROCESS IN MASSACHUSETTS**

Governor Deval Patrick is joined by legislators and advocates while signing S. 2067, "An Act Relative to a Uniform Anatomical Gift Act." (Photo credit: Eric Haynes / Governor's Office). [View additional photos.](#)

BOSTON – Wednesday, February 22, 2012 – Governor Deval Patrick today signed S. 2067, "An Act Relative to a Uniform Anatomical Gift Act," legislation that will promote organ donation by updating Massachusetts' Uniform Anatomical Gift Act (UAGA). The legislation is an important step to increase organ donations by aligning state statute with requirements currently in effect in neighboring states.

"We know the critically important role that organ donation plays in saving lives," said Governor Patrick. "I am proud to sign this bill that will promote the idea of organ donation and remove barriers to allow more people to become organ donors."

"Rarely do we get a chance to adopt a law that saves lives, saves money and comes with no expense to the state," said Senator Susan Fargo, the lead sponsor of the bill and the Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Public Health. "The first organ transplant was done right here in Massachusetts in the 1950's and now we have the first sweeping organ donor law overhaul in nearly 50 years. I offered this bill to keep families together, save lives and encourage more of us to become donors."

"Today in Massachusetts, thousands of patients are in desperate need of a life-saving organ transplant," said Representative Jeffrey Sánchez, House Chair of the Joint Committee on Public Health. "This new law will improve their chances that an organ will be found for them by removing the regulatory barriers to matching those patients with donors in Massachusetts and other states."

"The bill is important because it sets clear rules so that consent for organ and tissue donation can be obtained accurately, from the right person, and in a time frame necessary for donation to occur," said Richard S. Luskin, President and CEO of New

England Organ Bank. "With the bill's passage, Massachusetts joins 45 other states that have updated their laws regarding organ and tissue donation."

Under current requirements, New England's sole organ procurement organization must navigate various state-by-state requirements with minor differences. Standardization of these requirements throughout the region will facilitate organ donation across state lines and provide Massachusetts residents with greater availability of organs for transplant.

The primary amendments to the UAGA concern new requirements for the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV), setting forth that the agency:

- Include a description of the donor registry and UAGA in every license and registration renewal notice, including email notifications.
- Include the option to donate \$2 or more to the Organ and Tissue Donor Registration Fund on all license renewal forms, including those completed at RMV branch locations.
- Provide to the organ procurement organizations listed in the UAGA the names and dates of birth of individuals registered as organ and tissue donors (a disclaimer regarding this disclosure must be made to all donors).
- Provide an information session and informational materials during all required driver education and training courses.
- Develop an electronic organ donation registry on the RMV website.

In addition, the bill updates certain definitions and terms within UAGA regulations to clarify the role of a potential donor's family in the decision-making process and standardize the medical practices surrounding organ donations.

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