



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David Carlucci

## Senator Carlucci, Lauren Shields Join in New Push to Allow Not-for-Profits to Administer Donate Life Registry in New York

DAVID CARLUCCI June 5, 2013

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**ALBANY, NY** – Senator David Carlucci (D-Rockland/Westchester) today welcomed back organ donor champion Lauren Shields and advocacy groups to Albany in their latest effort to pass a sweeping overhaul of how the organ donation process is administered in New York State. In arguing for greater control over the Donate Life Registry for organ, eye, and tissue donation, advocates insist that legislators should support current legislation that would turn

over its operation and promotion of the Donate Life Registry to a not-for-profit statewide organization that has experience working in organ donation. In doing so, this would continue a nationwide trend of other states that already have made the appropriate transition in contracting out these services.

The bill (S5046/A7518), sponsored by Senator Kemp Hannon (R-Nassau) and Assemblyman Richard Gottfried (D-Manhattan), has been referred to the Health Committees of both respective chambers.

**Senator David Carlucci, (D-Rockland/Westchester), a co-sponsor to the bill, said:** “This legislation will continue our incredible progress to drastically increase the number of individuals who proudly call themselves organ donors. I am proud to support this bi-partisan legislation that will continue our mark in New York in making sure that anyone who needs a transplant has the resources at their disposal.”

New York State currently ranks 48<sup>th</sup> out of 50 states for its percentage of eligible residents enrolled in the Registry, a lackluster statistic complemented by having the third highest need for transplantable organs. Every 13 hours, one New Yorkers dies while waiting for a life-saving organ transplant.

Eight of the top ten states, all of which have a share over 60% of eligible residents participating in these registries, have turned over their operation and promoting of their registries to not-for-profit organizations. These states includes places like California, Texas, Illinois, and Florida.

Lauren Shields is best known for her tireless advocacy and successful push to get ‘Lauren’s Law’ signed into law, which is expected to save countless lives and increase the enrollment of organ donation. The Rockland County resident was a heart transplant recipient herself, launching a campaign to raise awareness about the need to drastically increase the number of organ and tissue donors. The law, slated to formally take effect in months, will require

individuals who apply for a driver's license to complete the organ donor registry section of the application by selecting either "yes" or "skip this question." Currently, filling out the section is optional.

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*Photo (R-L): Senator David Carlucci; Jeanne Shields, mother of Lauren Shields; Lauren Shields; Senator Kemp Hannon.*