



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Flanagan

Senator Flanagan Celebrates Organ Donor Enrollment Day

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New York State Senate Majority Leader John J. Flanagan today celebrated LiveOnNY's Organ Donor Enrollment Day – an annual event that aims to register as many organ donors as possible – by touting new statistics showing a million more New Yorkers have signed up to give the gift of life.

On Enrollment Day (<http://www.enrollmentday.org/>), individuals, teams, and organizations will focus on educating and enrolling people to save the lives of the 120,000 Americans who are currently waiting for a lifesaving transplant – approximately 10,000 of which live in New York.

Senator Flanagan said, “As a proudly registered organ donor, in honor of my late friend Assemblyman James Conte, I urge everyone to sign up to help make a difference in the lives of our fellow New Yorkers. If you have not already registered, please consider signing up to be an organ and tissue donor today. Thank you to all who have registered to save lives and to all who will soon take this important step.”

Since becoming Majority Leader, Senator Flanagan has used the bully pulpit to raise public awareness about organ and tissue donation and helped direct increased resources through state legislation and funding.

In combination with extensive outreach by advocates, the medical community, and other organ donation supporters, the percentage of eligible donors in New York has increased by nearly 1 million registrants or more than 6 percent (3.86 million in 2015 to 4.8 million in 2017) in the last two years alone.

Successful legislative initiatives have included an additional \$300,000 in this year's budget - for a total of \$1.3 million – as part of the Senate's ongoing commitment to help New Yorkers in need of lifesaving transplants; two 2016 laws sponsored by Senator Kemp Hannon allowing 16 and 17 year olds to register as donors and providing an opportunity to register for the Donate Life Registry when enrolling in the state's Health Benefit Exchange (resulting in 63,000 new registrants to date); creating an educational curriculum about organ donation to help high school students make informed decisions when they reach the age of consent; and the 2012 enactment of Lauren's Law, which has resulted in a 70 percent increase in donor registration through the DMV.

Senator Hannon (R, Nassau), Chair of the Senate Health Committee, said, “Each year the waiting list for organ transplants grows longer, with nearly 10,000 New Yorkers

currently awaiting a transplant in this state alone. As a longtime proponent of organ donation, and the sponsor of laws to allow donors to sign up through the State's Health Benefit Exchange, I urge residents to strongly become a lifesaving organ and tissue donor. It's quick and easy, and you can do it many ways, including visiting the Donate Life (www.donatelife.net) website. A single person donating at their death can help as many as 75 people."

Other legislation passed by the Senate this year and which will continue to be advocated for passage in both houses next session includes:

- Preventing discrimination against living organ or tissue donors who have or are applying for life, accident, health or long-term care;
- Establishing a one-time personal income tax credit for up to \$10,000 for expenses related to a taxpayer donating his or her organs for transplantation;
- Enabling SUNY, CUNY and library card applicants to register as an organ donor under an expansion of Lauren's Law;
- Adding human organ delivery vehicles to the list of authorized emergency vehicles in the state;
- To include information about organ and tissue donation and about how to register as an organ donor in the course required in order to get a New York State driver's license;
- Providing applicants for the practice of a profession or occupation, state income tax filers, and applicants registering motor vehicles with the option to register in the New York State Donate Life Registry; and
- Allowing a taxpayer or their spouse to deduct costs related to the taxpayer's organ donation, including childcare costs.

Senator Flanagan is scheduled to appear later today with New York Yankee Bernie Williams and former New York Jet and WFAN radio host Boomer Esiason in New York City to help sign up new donors at LiveOnNY's Organ Donor Enrollment Day event.