



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Skoufis

## Skoufis Introduces Bill to Provide Lifetime Health Insurance to Kidney Donors

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**\*\*PRESS RELEASE\*\***

### Skoufis Introduces Bill to Provide Lifetime Health Insurance to Kidney Donors

Senator James Skoufis (D-Hudson Valley) has introduced a new bill (S.6827) to provide lifetime healthcare through the state's insurance exchange to anyone in New York State who donates a kidney. Currently, over 8,000 people in New York State are waiting for a kidney transplant and through the first ten months of 2019, only 347 people have served as live kidney donors. The purpose of this bill is to increase kidney donation rates and save lives by providing an additional, justified incentive to individuals thinking of becoming donors.

"People are dying every day waiting for a kidney transplant, and New York's waitlist for kidney donations is the third longest in the country," said **Senator James Skoufis**. "There is a disproportionately low number of people who are live kidney donors and overwhelming demand for donations in our state. Clearly, additional, reasonable incentives are required to encourage people to make such an altruistic sacrifice. People who are selfless enough to donate a kidney should be provided with the peace of mind that they will never have to worry about health insurance."

**Josh Morrison, a kidney donor and founder of the donor advocacy nonprofit Waitlist Zero, said,** "Every living organ donor should receive the best health care money can buy. We as a society are obligated to do everything we can to ensure each donor's amazing generosity does not leave them worse off. Great health care starts with great health insurance, and Senator Skoufis has taken an important step in honoring donors' service by introducing this legislation. As a kidney donor, he and other legislators supporting this bill have my deepest gratitude."

**Michael Lollo, NYPD Detective and living kidney donor said,** "New York has over 8,000 people in need of a kidney. Every day a few of those people die waiting for that kidney. A bill such as this can drastically increase the number of living donors by assuring them that their health insurance will never be in question due to their precious gift. This is a major step in the right direction to drastically reduce the number of needed kidneys."

If signed into law, this bill will take effect immediately and apply to all altruistic kidney donations. This program will be funded through a newly-authorized Kidney Donor Insurance Fund that will be established within the budget process. The minimal costs associated with the new fund will be far lower than the sky-high expenses associated with dialysis services required for New Yorkers who are languishing on the transplant waitlist.

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