



## **Suggested Comments to the Board of Directors of the Organ Procedure and Transplant Network (OPTN) objecting to the Proposed Amendment on Organ Donation after Cardiac Death (DCD) Model Elements**

As someone deeply concerned about the dignity and worth of people with disabilities, who are among the most vulnerable members of society, I urge UNOS to reject the proposed changes to the Model Elements for organ donation. Simply put, the changes **seek to expedite the process of organ donation and expand the organ pool at the expense of** disabled persons on life support.

Three consequences of the proposed changes give me particular concern:

First, the primary health care team and organ procurement organization staff may examine hospitalized patients on life-support to determine their suitability for organ donation without such patients' or their families' knowledge or consent, even though such patients are not necessarily terminal or near death;

Second, if determined medically suitable, the hospital may initiate a request to the family for organ donation before the decision to withdraw such patient's life-support is made;

Third, an organ procurement organization is not required to condition eligibility for organ donation on assurances that a conscious patient's decision to have life-support withdrawn is voluntary and not a product of clinical depression.

Making organ transplants more available is unquestionably a laudable objective. But it cannot justify singling out disabled people on life-support as donation candidates since it would unavoidably rest on the assumption that their lives are less valuable than those of other persons.

Thank you for your serious consideration.