

November 13, 2013

The Honorable John Boehner  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. Capitol, H-232  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
House Minority Leader  
235 Cannon House Office Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Republican Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Boehner, Minority Leader Pelosi, Majority Leader Reid, and Republican Leader McConnell:

We are writing on behalf of the undersigned medical and health professional societies to thank both Chambers of Congress for working together to finalize passage of bi-partisan, life-saving, and cost effective legislation H.R. 698/S. 330, the "HIV Organ Policy Equity" (HOPE) Act.

We were very pleased to see the Senate pass the HOPE Act (S. 330) on June 17, 2013 by unanimous consent. Led by Senators Tom Coburn (R-OK) and Barbara Boxer (D-CA), the bill gained co-sponsorship from a diverse bi-partisan group of co-sponsors including Senators Paul (R-KY), Baldwin (D-WI), Enzi (R-WY), Warren (D-MA), Burr (R-NC), Landrieu (D-LA), Blunt (R-MO), Pryor (D-AR), Kirk (R-IL) and others. A month later, we were again pleased to watch the House Energy and Commerce committee pass the HOPE Act (H.R. 698) also by unanimous consent and with strong support from committee champions, Representatives Burgess (R-TX) and Capps (D-CA) as well as Representative Andy Harris, MD.

As medical and health professional societies, we have long been committed to policies that increase the pool of available organs for transplant. More than 8,000 people die each year waiting for a suitable organ to become available while, at the same time, the national waiting list for donor organs continues to grow. The HOPE Act would amend the Public Health Service Act to establish safeguards and standards of quality for research of organs infected with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and expand the supply of life-saving organs available for transplantation to the over 118,000 people on the national waiting list.

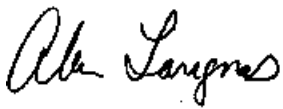
The HOPE Act would remove the 1988 ban on the use of HIV-positive organs for HIV-positive individuals in need of a donor organ. The current ban is simply not supportable in contemporary medicine but has been eclipsed in the last 25 years by significant advances in the treatment of HIV.

Furthermore, passage of this legislation will not only remove the ban and permit access to life-saving transplants; it will also allow the scientific and transplant community to conduct much needed research in this area.

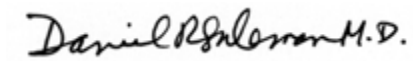
We are grateful to you and to all of the bill's co-sponsors and supporters for coming together to pass this common-sense legislation that will improve the lives of many patients in need of organ transplants. We applaud your leadership and commitment and that of your staffs to ensuring that our laws reflect current medical science in efforts to advance organ donation and research and, most importantly, save lives.

Sincerely,

Alan N. Langnas, D.O., President  
American Society of Transplant Surgeons



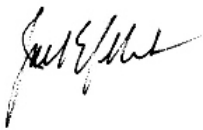
Daniel R. Salomon, M.D., President  
American Society of Transplantation



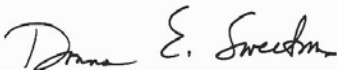
Sharon M. Moe, MD, FASN, President  
American Society of Nephrology



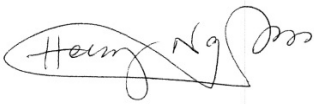
Joel Gallant, MD, MPH, FIDSA, Board Chair  
HIV Medicine Association



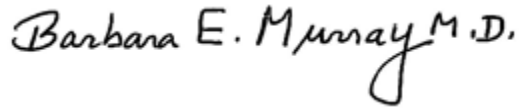
Donna Elaine Sweet, MD, MACP, AAHIVS, Chairperson  
American Academy of HIV Medicine



Henry Ng, MD, MPH, President  
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBT Equality



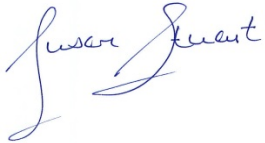
Barbara E. Murray, MD, FIDSA, President  
Infectious Diseases Society of America



Robert T. Carroll, PhD(c), RN, ACRN, President  
Association of Nurses in AIDS Care



Susan Stuart, President  
Association of Organ Procurement Organizations



David A Reznik, DDS, President  
HIV Dental Alliance



Carrie Lindower, RN, MBA, CPTC, CCTC, President  
NATCO, The Organization for Transplant Professionals



CC:

The Honorable Barbara Boxer  
The Honorable Tom Coburn, MD  
The Honorable Lois Capps  
The Honorable Andy Harris  
The Honorable Michael C. Burgess  
The Honorable Eric Cantor

The Honorable Steny Hoyer  
The Honorable Richard Durbin  
The Honorable John Cornyn  
The Honorable Fred Upton  
The Honorable Henry Waxman  
The Honorable Tammy Baldwin

The Honorable Richard Blumenthal  
The Honorable Roy Blunt  
The Honorable Richard Burr  
The Honorable Michael B. Enzi  
The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
The Honorable Mark Kirk  
The Honorable Mary L. Landrieu  
The Honorable Carl Levin  
The Honorable Rand Paul  
The Honorable Mark L. Pryor  
The Honorable Brian Schatz  
The Honorable Elizabeth Warren  
The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings  
The Honorable Raul M. Grijalva  
The Honorable Barbara Lee

The Honorable Rep Wilson, Frederica S.  
The Honorable Rep Moore, Gwen  
The Honorable Rep Payne, Donald M., Jr.  
The Honorable Rep Clay, Wm. Lacy  
The Honorable Rep Rangel, Charles B.  
The Honorable Rep Schiff, Adam B.  
The Honorable Tim Griffin  
The Honorable Bruce L. Braley  
The Honorable Jared Huffman  
The Honorable David Loebsack  
The Honorable Jared Polis  
The Honorable Robert J. Wittman  
The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton  
The Honorable Trey Radel  
The Honorable Jim Costa  
The Honorable Michael H. Michaud  
The Honorable Raul Ruiz  
The Honorable David N. Cicilline  
The Honorable Janice D. Schakowsky  
The Honorable Carolyn B. Maloney  
The Honorable Bobby L. Rush  
The Honorable Candice S. Miller  
The Honorable Mark Takano