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2/24/08

Rick Smith, President and CEO
James L. Boyer, MD Chairman of the Board
American Liver Foundation
75 Maiden Lane, Suite 603
New York, NY 10038

RE: ALF organ-donor policy & NIH liver bio-medical research funding

Dear Mr. Smith and Dr. Boyer,

We congratulate you on the ALF's organ-donor policy¹ that is supportive of Presumed Consent and "Donation Benefits" to help reverse America's organ-donor crisis of one person on the waiting list dying every 82 minutes² due to UNOS's organ shortages while 98,000—a number that continually increases—wait for the "Gift of Life." Indeed, we have utilized your stated policy on our enclosed template letter that has many eminent physicians and organ-donor advocates in favor of these policies.

Arthur J. Matas, MD, Director of the Renal Transplant Program at the University of Minnesota and former President of the American Society of Transplant Surgeons, has proposed a third policy to address the dire shortage of organs and we have added it to our template letter, namely, national regulation of government and insurer payments to living kidney donors. Under such a policy the government and private insurers would provide a combination of the following benefits to an adult donating a kidney: \$50,000//lifetime medical insurance (Medicare)//tax benefits. Many believe the 74,000 kidney waiting list would be completely eliminated within five to ten years with this policy.

We urge you to place significant priority on adding Dr. Matas's proposed policy to your stated support for Presumed Consent and "Donation Benefits" and publicly lobby for its acceptance by UNOS and the OPS's.

In addition, we have given 100 presentations³ in the House and Senate office buildings asking that NIH bio-medical research allocations be distributed more fairly and equitably. In each, we have pointed out the insufficient research funding for liver illnesses.

In addition to publicly supporting Dr. Matas's proposal, we urge you to also speak out on the disproportionate funding by the NIH that results in \$3,052 being spent on behalf of each HIV/AIDS patients for bio-medical research while only \$25 and \$29 is spent on hepatitis C and B respectively.

With great respect for your efforts, we are,

Richard Darling, DDS

and the 28-member Board of Directors below

Richard Darling, DDS, President & CEO

Past National Public Citizen of the Year

Author: *Coma Life*, 3 X liver transplant recipient

¹ <http://www.liverfoundation.org/about/advocacy/organdonationpolicy/>

² http://fairfoundation.org/organdonation/waiting_list_death_rate.htm

³ http://fairfoundation.org/news_letter/2006/05dec/traveling_with_fair.htm

Waldo Concepcion

Waldo Concepcion, M.D., FACS
Associate Chief, Div. of Transplantation
Stanford University School of Medicine

John Fung

John Fung, M.D.
Chairman, Department of General Surgery
Director, Transplant Center, Cleveland Clinic

Leonard J. Morse, M.D.

Leonard J. Morse, M. D.
Commissioner of Public Health, Worcester, MA
Board of Directors: Worcester AIDS Project Workshop
Recipient: AMA's "Pride in the Profession" award
Chair Emeritus, AMA Council on Ethical &
Judicial Affairs (CEJA)
Past President, Mass. Medical Society & the Boston Medical Library

Donald J. Hillebrand

Donald J. Hillebrand, MD
Medical Director, Liver Transplant
Scripps Green Hospital
La Jolla, CA

Okechukwu N. Ojogho, MD.

Okechukwu N. Ojogho, MD
Director, Transplantation Institute
Loma Linda University Medical Center

Pedro Baron, MD

Pedro Baron, MD
Director of Pediatric and Adult Liver
Loma Linda University Medical Center

Phil Berry

Phil Berry, MD
Founder/Past President: Texas Medical Assoc.
President, Texas Medical Assoc. Foundation
Past member, UNOS Board & Finance, Dallas, TX

Lorenzo Rossaro

Lorenzo Rossaro, MD
Medical Director/Chief of Hepatology
Liver Transplant Department
UC Davis School of Medicine, Sacramento, CA

Robert Gish, MD

Robert Gish, MD
Director of Liver Transplant, Ca Pacific Med Ctr.
Member, AASLD. San Francisco, CA

Melba Moore, MS

Melba Moore, MS
Commissioner of Public Health
St. Louis Department of Public Health

Dave Courtney

Dave Courtney, Patient Advocate
Alpha-1-Antitrypsin disease
VP: The Presumed Consent Foundation

Ray Hill

Ray Hill, Patient Advocate, HIV/AIDS and Hep C
ACLU Lifetime Achievement Award
Houston's Gay Male Hero Award-7 years

Jan Warner

Jan Warner, Executive Director
The Dennis James United Cerebral Palsy Center
Cathedral City, CA

Bill Roberts

Bill Roberts, Patient Advocate
Diabetes and Hepatitis C
Hacienda Heights, California 91745

Arthur Curley

Arthur Curley, Attorney-at-Law
President, Bradley Curley Asiano, PC
Larkspur, California

Charles Goodacre, DDS, MS

Charles Goodacre, DDS, MS
Dean, School of Dentistry, Loma Linda U.
Past President, American Board of Pros.

Jill Weissman, Pharm. D.

Jill Weissman, Pharm. D.
Transplant Pharmacist; Assistant Professor
Loma Linda University Medical Center

Richard Swabb, MD

Richard Swabb, MD
Board Certified in Nephrology & Int. Med
Loma Linda University Medical Center

William M. Remak

Bill Remak, B.Sc.MT, BA PHA
Chairman, California Hep. C Task Force
Founder, Nat Assoc of Hep. Task Forces

Philip M. Rugo

Philip Rugo, Patient Advocate: ALD
Director: Harrison House Substance &
Abuse Rehabilitation Center
Northampton, MA

Sandra Rodgers

Sandy Rodgers, Patient Advocate
Parkinson's Disease and Stroke
Kapalua, Maui, Hawaii

Norman Kay

Norman Kay, Patient Advocate:
Prostate Cancer
Lahaina, Maui, Hawaii

Jim Ward

Jim Ward, Captain, SC, USNR (Ret.)
Patient Advocate: Cardiovascular Disease

Michael Evanoff

Mike Evanoff, Patient Advocate:
Arthritis, Palm Desert, California

Jan Warner

Jan Warner, Executive Director
The Dennis James United Cerebral Palsy Center
Cathedral City, California

Nancy D. Zampieri

Patient Advocate: Breast Cancer
Charlotte, NC

Kress Darling

Kress Darling, Patient Advocate
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
Palm Desert, California

Jacqueline Marcell

Jacqueline Marcell
Patient Advocate: Alzheimer's disease,
Caregivers and Elder Awareness
Author/Publisher: *Elder Rage* & Radio Host
Irvine, California