



October 20 2017

Representative John R. Carter  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2110 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington D.C. 20015

**Re: Letter in Support of the Veterans Transplant Coverage Act of 2017**

Dear Representative Carter,

The undersigned transplant patient, physician, and other provider organizations write in strong support of H.R. 1133, “The Veterans Transplant Coverage Act of 2017.”

At this time, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) policy limits veterans’ access to life-saving transplants as it does not cover the medical expenses of non-veteran living donors. This policy means that if a veteran in need of a transplant has a living donor match, a lifesaving transplant may remain out of reach simply because of the non-veteran status of the donor.

The Veterans Transplant Coverage Act expands access to lifesaving transplant procedures for veterans by authorizing the VA to cover the costs of an operation on a living donor to carry out a transplant for an eligible veteran even if the living donor is not otherwise eligible for VA health care. Currently, other federal government health care programs cover live donors’ health care needs. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) provides coverage of living donors for kidney transplants. We believe, at a minimum, that our nation’s Veterans deserve the same access to care that Medicare beneficiaries receive.

The Veterans Transplant Coverage Act would help ensure that the men and women who have served our nation are given the same access to life-saving treatments that other American citizens have. Finally, we note that H.R. 1133 also authorizes the VA to cover live donor transplant operations at a VA or non-VA facility, increasing access to high quality medical care and transplantation.

We are pleased to support the Veterans Transplant Coverage Act of 2017 for our nation’s veterans and those who give the gift of life to sustain their lives. Thank you for your leadership in advancing bipartisan legislation to improve transplantation care for veterans. If you have any questions, or if we can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact any of our legislative representatives listed below.

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