

ACTION ALERT!

22 March 2010

Organ Donations and Children - OPPOSE AB 2751 -

Sacramento - State Assembly bill **AB 2751**, *Schools, health education*, by Assemblyman Tom Ammiano (D – San Francisco) would require 9th and 10th grade students to receive instruction on organ procurement and tissue donation. The bill's stated purpose is to develop a knowledge of the potentially lifesaving achievement involved in organ and tissue transplantation.

AB 2751 declares that more than 100,000 people are on the national organ transplant waiting list, 21 percent of who live in California. It laments that "Currently only 25 percent of applicants for California drivers licenses register as organ and tissue donors." It declares, "There is an urgent need to educate the public about organ and tissue donation."

The bill notes that nonprofit organ procurement organizations, including Donate Life California, may provide school districts with the information for instruction required by the bill. The DonateLifeCalifornia.com website states, "If you are between 13 and 17 years old, you can join the Donate California Registry, but your parents will make the final decision about organ and tissue donation at the appropriate time." Clearly, AB 2751 is targeting minors in the classroom as potential organ donors.

AB 2751 raises deep concern in numerous areas. [Read the bill.](#)

First, there are cases where people brought back from the brink of death have narrowly missed having their organs harvested because they were erroneously considered dead. Although sophisticated tests to verify death have been developed, they may not always be used before organ and tissue harvesting begin. A standardized death verification test should be assured for all organ and tissue donors. AB 2751 does not address this core issue.

Second, impressionable ninth and tenth grade students may draw over-reaching conclusions from limited information presented in the 15-minute minimum instruction specified by AB 2751. A minor's decision to some day place a pink dot on his driver license should involve adequate discussion with parents. In a life-threatening accident, the pink dot will result in tension between healing and harvesting, between aggressive medical treatment and pulling the plug. It needs to be given careful consideration, which AB 2751 does not provide.

Third, AB 2751 interjects "organ procurement and tissue donation" instruction into state education frameworks development delegated to the Curriculum Development and Supplemental Materials Commission. Despite limited classroom time and dwindling state resources, this bill adds to the non-academic component of California's almost 50th ranked national educational performance. AB 2751 detracts from badly needed back-to-basics education.

Fourth, AB 2751 interjects itself between parent and child, between family and faith. AB 2751 assumes a public acceptance of organ and tissue transplant that does not exist for all ethnic and religious communities. Should there be an opt-out option with its awkward implementation at school? Is indoctrination of children the purview of the state or parents and church? America has held to the latter.

TAKE ACTION!

Please contact Assemblyman Tom Ammiano and express your opposition to AB 2751 and its unjustified intrusion into the schoolroom. It promotes activity lacking adequate safeguards, it encourages children to make profoundly adult decisions, it detracts from public schools education mission, and it comes between parent and child. Ask him to withdraw AB 2751

Send your statement of **Opposition** (organizations please use letterhead) for record entry to Assembly Member Tom Ammiano, State Capitol, Room 4005, Sacramento, CA 95814; 916-319-2013; 916-319-2113 fax; with copy to Assembly Republican Caucus Leader Martin Garrick, State Capitol, Room 3104, Sacramento, CA 95814, (916) 319-2074, (916) 319-2174 fax. Please include your phone number in communications with the Garrick office..

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