



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0789-2015, **Version:** *

Res. No. 789

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, A.4990A/S.5313, an act that would allow 16- and 17-year-olds to register as organ, eye, and tissue donors.

By Council Member Constantinides

Whereas, According to the United States Department of Health and Human Services (“HHS”), nearly 30,000 Americans received organ transplants in 2014; and

Whereas, One organ donor can save up to eight lives, while a donor of tissues can improve the lives of more than 50 people by restoring eyesight, treating burn patients, and preventing disability, according to Donate Life America; and

Whereas, However, HHS data show that an average of 21 people die every day while waiting for transplants that cannot take place due to the shortage of donated organs; and

Whereas, The New York Alliance for Donation reports that currently, there are more than 10,000 people in New York State waiting for life-saving organ transplants; and

Whereas, According to LiveOnNY, a New Yorker dies every 15 hours while waiting for an organ transplant; and

Whereas, New York State ranked 49th in the country in 2013 for its rate of registered donors for organs, eyes, and tissues, according to Donate Life America’s 2014 National Designation Report Card; and

Whereas, The same report card showed that New York State had only 22% of adults registered as donors, while the national average was 48%, and states such as Alaska, Montana, and Washington had rates of 80% or more; and

Whereas, In response to the State’s low donor registration rate and the needless deaths of hundreds of

New Yorkers a year, New York State Assembly Member Felix Ortiz and State Senator Kemp Hannon introduced A.4990A and S.5313, respectively; and

Whereas, A.4990A/S.5313 would allow 16- and 17-year-olds to register as organ, eye, and tissue donors, while preserving their legal guardians' ability to give final authorization if a child became eligible to donate before age 18; and

Whereas, 44 states currently have either no age restriction for donor registration or allow those younger than 18 to enroll, according to the Eye-Bank for Sight Restoration; and

Whereas, Many states, including California, North Carolina, Oregon, and Virginia, allow children between the ages of 13 and 17 to join a donor registry, while requiring their legal guardians to give consent should possible donation occur before a child turned 18; and

Whereas, To save more lives, New York State should join the majority of states in expanding eligibility for organ, eye, and tissue donors; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, A.4990A/S.5313, an act that would allow 16- and 17-year-olds to register as organ, eye, and tissue donors.

LS# 4921

6/10/15

LW