

C.A.R.E. FOR LIVING DONORS ACT: HB 24-1132 COMPREHENSIVE ASSISTANCE, RECOGNITION, AND EMPOWERMENT FOR LIVING DONORS ACT

Prime Sponsors

State Representatives Manny Rutinel and Mary Bradfield

State Senator Janet Buckner

OVERVIEW

This bill seeks to address the critical need for organ donations in Colorado by introducing measures that remove barriers and protect potential living organ donors. It aims to remove barriers to living organ donations and promote a culture of giving and support for those in need of life-saving transplants.

ORGANIZATIONAL ENDORSEMENTS:

AARP Colorado, National Kidney Registry, Kidneys for Kids, National Kidney Donation Organization, Waitlist Zero, The Coalition to Modify NOTA, The Organ Trail, DOVE (Donor Outreach for Veterans), Chris Klug Foundation, Chronic Care Collaborative, Drive for Five.

OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED IMPACT

- Increase the number of organ donations in Colorado.
- Alleviate the emotional and financial burden on individuals and families waiting for transplants.
- Recognize and honor the generosity of living organ donors.
- Prioritize family members of living donors on organ donation waitlists.
- Save lives by increasing the availability of organs for transplantation.
- Improve the quality of life for individuals awaiting transplants.
- Raise public awareness about organ donation.

The Critical Need for Organ Donation in Colorado:

1. The Growing Waitlist

- Thousands of Coloradans are on the organ donation waitlist, each representing a person facing daily struggles and the anxiety of waiting for a call that could change their life.
- Unfortunately, 151 Coloradans died on this waitlist in 2023.

2. The Painful Waiting Game

- The emotional and physical toll is immense for those on the waitlist.
- The wait for a kidney transplant can be upwards of several years, during which patients may endure grueling dialysis treatments multiple times per week.
- For others, the wait could mean a continual battle with life-threatening conditions, diminishing quality of life, and ongoing hospital visits.

3. Economic Strain on Individuals and Families

- The cost of medical care for individuals waiting for transplants places an enormous burden on them and their families.
- The loss of income, combined with the high costs of treatments, like dialysis, can lead to financial hardship, even bankruptcy.

4. Economic Strain on Society

- The impact of organ shortages is felt throughout Colorado's healthcare system.
- Longer wait times can lead to poorer health outcomes and increased medical costs for the entire community.

5. Transplant Success

- Colorado boasts high success rates for organ transplants, underscoring the transformative potential of receiving an organ.
- Transplants save lives and restore them, allowing individuals to return to work, spend time with family, and enjoy everything Colorado has to offer.

Key Provisions and their Importance:

1. Workforce Discrimination Protection:

- *Importance:* Protects living donors from being unfairly treated or dismissed from their jobs due to the time off needed for organ donation and recovery.

2. Tax Credit Benefits:

- *Importance:* Provides a significant reimbursable tax credit to living donors, easing the financial impact of organ donation.

3. Waitlist Priority for Donor Families:

- *Importance:* Ensures that non-directed living organ donors understand the availability of family vouchers that prioritize family members on organ donation waitlists.

4. Recognition License Plate:

- *Importance:* Raises public awareness about organ donation and honors the contributions of donors and supporters.

5. Living Donor Appreciation Day:

- *Importance:* Establishes a day to celebrate and recognize the generosity of living organ donors.

Kidney failure (ESRD) in Colorado

2021

8,292
Colorado residents

are living with end-stage renal disease (ESRD, or kidney failure). Without treatment—dialysis or a transplant—ESRD is fatal.



SOURCE: U.S. Renal Data System 2020 Annual Data Report

Only about 1 in 4 Colorado residents on the waiting list got a kidney transplant in 2020.

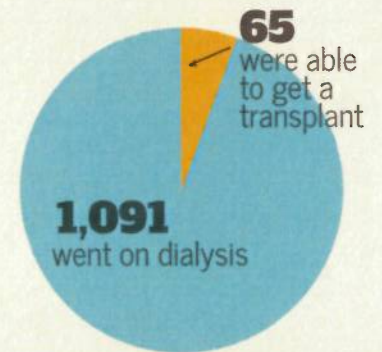


1,358 are on the waiting list for a kidney transplant
356 kidney transplants were performed in Colorado in 2020

SOURCE: Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network

1,156
New cases of kidney failure

were diagnosed in Colorado in 2018 (the most recent data available).



SOURCE: U.S. Renal Data System 2020 Annual Data Report

Colorado residents are at risk for kidney disease

Leading causes of kidney failure



Diabetes

High blood pressure

**CO
AT
RISK:**

7.0% have diabetes

25.8% have high blood pressure

23.8% self-report obese

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System

Why ESRD patients depend on charitable assistance

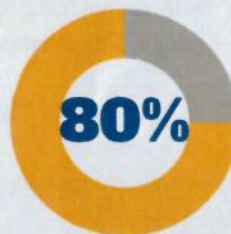
1,076 Colorado residents

on dialysis and with transplants received grants from AKF in 2020 to pay for their insurance premiums, emergency pandemic-related costs and other health care-related costs not covered by insurance.

\$3.7 million

in charitable assistance from AKF ensured that low-income Colorado dialysis and transplant patients could afford their lifesaving health care.

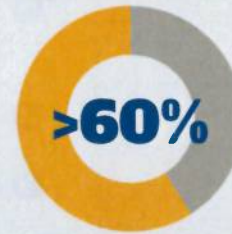
Most dialysis patients too sick to work



ESRD IS A DISABILITY

Dialysis is life support. Treating kidney failure and its comorbidities is more consuming than a full-time job: more than 80% of patients cannot work

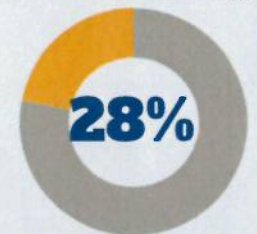
Most patients AKF helps are minorities



MINORITIES ARE MORE AFFECTED BY ESRD

Of the patients AKF helps, 34.7% are Black, 20.9% Hispanic/Latino, 5.2% Native American/Asian/Pacific Islander

Ratio of out-of-pocket to income is stunning



FINANCIAL HARDSHIP COMES WITH ESRD

Average income of patients AKF helps is < \$25,000, yet average out-of-pocket costs for dialysis patients is > \$10,000/yr

9th leading cause of death in the U.S.

The facts about kidney disease

Kidneys are vital organs—just like the heart, lungs and liver. They clean the blood, help control blood pressure, help make red blood cells, and keep bones healthy.

- Chronic kidney disease is an increasingly common but usually preventable condition. **More than 37 million Americans have kidney disease** and millions more are at risk.
- According to the CDC, 9 out of 10 people with early kidney disease don't know they have it because it **usually has no symptoms until the late stages**. Simple blood and urine tests can tell how well the kidneys are working.
- Diabetes and high blood pressure are the **two leading causes of kidney disease**. Kidney disease can lead to heart attack, stroke, kidney failure and death.
- Kidney disease can be treated. If it's caught and treated early, it's often **possible to slow or stop the progress of kidney disease**.
- Besides diabetes and high blood pressure, other **common risks** for kidney disease include:
 - Having a **family history of kidney disease**
 - Being **Black, Hispanic, Asian American or Native American**
 - Being **over 60**
- Black Americans are **3.4 times more likely than whites** to develop kidney failure, and **Hispanics are 1.5 times more likely than non-Hispanics** to develop kidney failure.

Kidney disease is
a silent killer



- There are more than **785,000 people with kidney failure** in the United States—an **increase of more than 100% since 2000**.
 - About 555,000 are on dialysis and nearly 230,000 are living with kidney transplants.
 - Each month, **almost 11,000 new cases of kidney failure** are diagnosed.
- In 2018, Medicare spending for ESRD beneficiaries was **\$49.2 billion—7.2% of Medicare costs**—though **ESRD patients make up less than 1%** of the total Medicare population.
- A patient on hemodialysis costs Medicare **more than \$93,000 per year**.
- For each kidney disease patient who does not reach kidney failure, **Medicare saves an estimated \$250,000**.
- **One third** of people who were diagnosed with kidney failure in 2018 received **little or no pre-ESRD care**.

Costly to patients,
employers and taxpayers

