



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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NATIONAL KIDNEY MONTH BRINGS NEW PUSH FOR ORGAN DONOR JOB PROTECTIONS

Largest Kidney Group Mobilizes Patients and Medical Allies for Congressional Action

Washington, D.C. – The American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP), the nation’s largest independent and patient-led kidney organization, has mobilized a broad grassroots collaborative of kidney patients, organ donors and their families, allied medical experts, and leaders in kidney research and the pharmaceutical industry to prepare for bipartisan Congressional action aimed at new job and insurance protections for living organ donors. In 2018, the Executive Branch of government responded to concerns raised by kidney transplant advocates and medical professionals and, through a U.S. Department of Labor legal opinion, extended Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) protections to living organ donors. Since that time, kidney patients, transplant experts, and allied kidney organizations have relentlessly pushed the U.S. Congress to follow this precedent and to codify comprehensive job and insurance protections for living organ donors in legislation. AAKP is calling on all people and organizations interested in joining the national campaign to add their voice by [clicking here](#).

March is the designated month when all Americans and the U.S. Congress are asked to focus on kidney disease, a chronic condition labeled the “silent killer” that impacts nearly 40 million people, with 700,000 suffering from kidney failure. Throughout National Kidney Month, AAKP is raising its voice to increase disease awareness and push for greater innovation and patient consumer care choice in treatments, including a major increase in the number of available organs for preemptive transplants and transplants for those living on dialysis.

In 2019, AAKP launched the [Decade of the Kidney™ Initiative](#) to accelerate research investments and innovations in kidney medicine, including artificial implantable and wearable kidneys, and to remove barriers to increased organ donation and transplantation. In 2020, AAKP, along with allied kidney organizations, won a major battle in the U.S. House of Representatives ([read now](#)) and the U.S. Senate ([read now](#)) to extend transplant drug coverage for kidney transplant recipients beyond a 36 month limit to the life of the organ. AAKP launched the largest [kidney patient voter registration drive](#) in 2018 and will be leveraging new technologies to secure Congressional passage of living organ donor protections in 2021. Through the AAKP Center for Patient Engagement and Advocacy, tens of thousands of Americans will be encouraged to raise their voice in support of Congressional [action](#).

AAKP activities in March will highlight many of its national and global education and advocacy programs and encourages the kidney community to join our efforts by participating in Association activities all month long:

- **AAKP Speakers Bureau:** AAKP Board Members and Ambassadors will be available to organizations interested in learning more about kidney diseases; patient consumer care choice and access to therapies including preemptive transplantation, dialysis, transplantation, and other strategic issues including health inequities and disparities; as well as policy advocacy. To learn

more about nationally and internationally recognized and award-winning AAKP speakers in your area, contact Erin Kahle, Director of Stakeholder Operations at ekahle@aakp.org. [Click here](#) to visit the Speakers Bureau. [Click here](#) to view AAKP's National Board of Directors.

- **AAKP Counts Down to World Kidney Day March 11:** Visit AAKP's World Kidney Day web page (<https://aakp.org/world-kidney-day>) to learn about the Association's latest programs and initiatives and find out how to support the work of AAKP!
- **AAKP Raise Your Voice Campaign** aims to increase AAKP social media followers in recognition of Kidney Month 2021. Join the movement this March at www.facebook.com/kidneypatient; www.twitter.com/KidneyPatients; and www.instagram.com/kidneypatients. Share, like, and comment!
- **AAKP Take 2, Tell 5 Campaign** aims to increase awareness of kidney disease among those at risk for kidney diseases, including minority and underrepresented communities. This social media campaign will provide a variety of educational information, encouraging individuals to take two minutes to review and tell five people. This campaign exemplifies AAKP's grassroots efforts by activating kidney patients to engage fellow members of their community that are not online. Follow us to learn more at www.facebook.com/kidneypatient; www.twitter.com/KidneyPatients; and www.instagram.com/kidneypatients.
- **SAVE THE DATE! AAKP Opens Registration for all 2021 Virtual Events!**
 - 3rd Annual Global Summit on Kidney Innovation (May 13-14) – [Click here to learn more and register](#).
 - 4th Annual Public Policy Summit (June 17) – [Click here to learn more and register](#).
 - 46th Annual National Patient Meeting (September 24-25) – [Click here to learn more and register](#).
 - 3rd Annual AAKP Fun Walk (December 6-17) – [Click here to learn more and register](#).

For more information about AAKP's educational and advocacy programs, visit www.aakp.org or join today as a **FREE** member at www.aakp.org/join. To support AAKP, make a tax-deductible donation at www.aakp.org/giveyourway or call (800) 749-2257.

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Founded in 1969, AAKP is the largest and oldest fully independent kidney patient organization in America. Governed by a patient-majority Board of Directors, AAKP conducts the largest patient meeting in the nation and, in partnership with the George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences, has conducted the Global Summit on Kidney Innovation, the largest global virtual patient-led kidney meeting with over 70 countries engaged in 2020. AAKP executes a national advocacy strategy in conjunction with allied kidney organizations designed to insert the patient voice into proposed policies, research efforts, and care deliberations before the Executive Branch and the U.S. Congress.

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