

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

February 27, 2026

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Brendan LaCivita

National and Medical Media Specialist

(813) 906-7740

blacivita@aakp.org

Kidney Patients Praise U.S. Senators for Vote to Protect Living Organ Donors

***Elimination of Insurance Discrimination Toward Living Organ Donors Within Reach
After Bipartisan Majority of U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pension
Committee Votes in Favor of The Living Donor Protection Act***

Potential Living Organ Donors Cite Fear of Insurance Loss as Key Hesitancy

Washington, D.C. – The American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP), the largest independent kidney patient organization in America, issued the following statement today after the U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pension (HELP) Committee voted in favor of the Living Donor Protection Act (LDPA - [S. 1552](#) - [S.1552](#)) on Thursday, February 26, 2026. The LDPA legislation mirrors two related pieces of widely supported, bipartisan legislation co-sponsored in the U.S. House of Representatives by Representatives Don Bacon (R-NE) and Jerold Nadler (D-NY): [H.R. 4582](#), and [H.R. 4583](#). Advocates anticipate Congress will take final legislative action later this year.

The Living Donor Protection Act (LDPA) is specifically designed to remove one of the most frequently cited barriers among altruistic living organ donors - the fear and uncertainty surrounding potential insurance discrimination, or loss, based solely on their decision to donate an organ. The legislation will protect living organ donors from the loss of life, disability income, or long-term care coverage. The legislation is a top strategic priority for kidney patients, organ donors, [transplant experts](#), [kidney doctors](#), and the [insurance industry](#). Efforts to pass greater Congressional protections for living organ donors, as a means of increasing the nation's organ supply and saving more innocent lives, date back over 20 years.

In 2018, under President Donald J. Trump, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) via the DOL's Wage and Hour Division, extended protections under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) to many living organ donors based on original Congressional intent ([read DOL guidance here](#) / [read AAKP press release here](#) / [watch DOL announcement here](#)). The action by the U.S. Senate HELP Committee moves Congress one step closer to enshrining these protections permanently into federal law for all Americans who may consider, and be medically eligible, to donate a kidney to save another life.

Statement

"The American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP), the largest independent kidney patient organization in the nation, expresses our deep gratitude to the bipartisan majority of the U.S. Senate Health Education, Labor and Pension Committee for voting in favor of the Living Donor Protection Act. Under the leadership of co-sponsors Senator Tom Cotton (R-AR) and Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), and acting alongside a tremendous coalition of bipartisan Members of the U.S. House Representatives, America has moved closer to protecting courageous living organ donors from insurance discrimination based solely on their decision to help save the life of another human being. No society, including our own, can call itself truly advanced or civil if the altruistic instinct to selflessly save another life carries with it the risk of losing insurance protections and financial security. We express our deep appreciation and respect to the legions of principled transplant professionals, kidney doctors, and top executives within the American life insurance industry for working collaboratively with the kidney patient and organ donor community to support the consensus language in this historic legislation. We also honor and remember the thousands of kidney patients who needlessly lost their lives while living on dialysis and the national organ wait list because no kidneys were available for transplantation. AAKP will exercise the full strength of our national grassroots capacities to help our Congressional champions gain final passage of this bipartisan legislation and to bring an end to one of the most frequently cited barriers to increased living organ donation."

Edward V. Hickey, III, USMC (ret.)

President

American Association of Kidney Patients

###

Since 1969, AAKP has elevated the patient voice to advance greater kidney patient consumer care choice and treatment innovations. By 1973, AAKP patients had successfully advocated the U.S. Congress and the White House to pass and implement legislation that ensures Americans with kidney failure access to dialysis and transplantation coverage. The resulting End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) program, paid by U.S. taxpayers and administered by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS), has since saved millions of innocent lives. In 2018, AAKP established the largest U.S. kidney voter registration program, *KidneyVoters™*. Over the past decade, AAKP patients have helped gain lifetime transplant immunosuppressive drug coverage for kidney transplant recipients (2020); new patient-centered policies via the White House *Executive Order on Advancing American Kidney Health* (2019); and Congressional legislation allowing HIV-positive organ transplants for HIV-positive patients (2013). Follow AAKP on social media at [@kidneypatient](#) on Facebook and [@kidneypatients](#) on X, and visit www.aakp.org for more information.