

2014 "April is Donate Life Month" Radio Media Tour
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This is a very important month to honor those who have donated organs in the past and to thank their families for that gift of life, and also a time to encourage more to register to be organ, eye, and tissue donors in the future.

We have the capacity now, because of miracles of modern medicine, to save lives through organ transplantation, but unfortunately we have over 120,000 people on waiting lists hoping for a lifesaving organ and we don't have enough donor supply. So that's what this month is all about, and we want people to talk about this issue with their families and friends and register to donate in the future.

So there are two steps to get more people involved. One is to have people register at the Department of Motor Vehicles when you are getting your license renewed. Another is to go to organdonor.gov and sign up and make your wishes known. And then we also want people to talk about this issue with their families and friends.

This is a public health issue where people can help other people. And when you meet recipients who have gotten the gift of life from someone else, it's just an incredibly inspirational story. In fact, right now our department is releasing several new public service announcements in a campaign entitled "Made Possible by an Organ Donor," and when you see these on the organdonor.gov website you'll be really moved by what one person can do to help another person.

Modern medicine has really made tremendous progress here so we can transplant kidneys, livers, hearts, lungs, the list does go on. And then, of course, there's corneal transplant and tissue transplant as well. So there's so many ways to help another person, and that's why this is a critical opportunity to talk about these issues and make donation wishes known to family and friends.

Ultimately we have greater numbers across the country who view this as an opportunity to contribute to help somebody else. We say that this is an opportunity, actually, to turn a moment of unbelievable loss to a moment of unbelievable opportunity, and most people understand that over time. So that's why these discussions are so important.