

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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Senator Mia Costello **District K – West Anchorage**

Sponsor Statement

Senate Bill 147

“An Act requiring the Department of Administration to allow individuals to execute an anatomical gift when renewing a driver’s license; and establishing April of each year as Donate Life Month.”

Senate Bill 147 raises awareness about life-saving organ, eye, and tissue donation by making it easier for Alaskans to register as donors and indicate on their driver’s license that they are a donor. With a larger registry of Alaskans willing to give the gift of life, those who are waiting for a transplant can receive the vital medical care they need that much sooner.

Currently, Alaskans cannot select the option register as an organ donor when renewing their driver’s license online or by mail, but Senate Bill 147 would make that possible. Under the current system, Alaskans must go to the Division of Motor Vehicles in person in order to register as an organ donor on their driver’s license, which is a major way Alaskans indicate if they are donors. This creates an unnecessary barrier for those who wish to include this option on their driver’s license. Senate Bill 147 allows Alaskans who renew their driver’s license online or by mail to register as an organ, eye, and tissue donor when they fill out the license renewal form.

According to LifeCenter Northwest, there are 150 people on the organ transplant waitlist in Alaska, with over 100,000 people waiting for an organ transplant in the United States. One organ and tissue donor can save or significantly improve the lives of over 100 recipients. Senate Bill 147 seeks to make it easier for Alaskans to sign up to donate and would also establish April of each year as Donate Life Month to recognize the importance of and need for organ donation.