



THE NATIONAL KIDNEY FOUNDATION  
30 E. 33<sup>rd</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10016  
212.889.2210

February 18, 2025

The Honorable Charles Grassley  
Chairman, US Senate Committee on the Judiciary  
135 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ron Wyden  
Ranking Member, US Senate Committee on Finance  
221 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Unwarranted Terminations of HRSA Employees

Dear Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Wyden,

The National Kidney Foundation (NKF) is writing to express our dismay at learning that terminations across the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) over the weekend implicated probationary employees working to modernize the Organ Procurement and Transplant Network (OPTN). We understand that these indiscriminate, mass layoffs include members of HRSA's Division of Transplantation working across every aspect of the modernization initiative. We respectfully request your assistance in working with the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) to ensure each terminated employee is reinstated as quickly as possible.

Stated simply, mass layoffs instituted by DOGE directly conflict with continued efforts by the U.S. Congress to reform the U.S. transplant system. A goal of the bipartisan, bicameral *Securing the U.S. Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network Act* was to reduce fraud, waste, and abuse in the policymaking apparatus for solid organ transplantation. Senators Grassley and Cassidy recently introduced the OPTN Fee Collection Authority Act to support modernization activities and improve the stewardship and oversight of registration fees from Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network (OPTN) members. These efforts cannot move forward with the efficiency and transparency envisioned by lawmakers if HRSA's DOT is not staffed to support them. If DOGE aims to reduce fraud, waste, and abuse and improve government efficiency, it is imperative they understand that terminating employees working on system reforms will ensure the opposite effect.

NKF continues to be a strong supporter of the bipartisan Congressional efforts to reform the transplant system. The loss of staff hired to support the implementation of the modernization initiative directly conflicts with the aims of OPTN modernization. In the 18 months since the *Securing the U.S. Organ Procurement and Transplant Network Act* was signed, NKF has closely monitored the implementation the law and advocated for a robust appropriation to support it. As part of its efforts to modernize the OPTN, HRSA hired numerous new staff with deep expertise in procurement, nursing, solid organ transplant, and in enhancing digital services. It must be without controversy to state that the government benefits from the commitment of experts who are willing to set aside other ambitions to serve the American people. For the purposes of the OPTN modernization, we firmly believe the expertise contributed by these new hires is essential to providing a framework in which HRSA's efforts to increase government capacity and functionality and improve policymaking and oversight deliver on the needs of patients and their families. That these employees are in their probationary period reflects nothing about their performance and only that the OPTN modernization initiative is relatively new.

The actions of DOGE towards the Division of Transplantation will do nothing to increase government efficiency or identify fraud, waste, and abuse, but rather are guaranteed to stymie the the efforts by Congress to modernize our transplant system to the benefit of all Americans. We implore you to do all in your power to ensure the work of



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the OPTN modernization can continue unimpeded and that we are honoring the experts who have committed their talents and expertise to support this lifesaving effort.

We look forward to an update at your earliest convenience. Please contact Miriam Godwin, Vice President of Health Policy, at [miriam.godwin@kidney.org](mailto:miriam.godwin@kidney.org).

Sincerely,

Kevin Longino, MBA  
CEO and Transplant Recipient

Kirk Campbell, MD  
President

Cc:

The Honorable Todd Young  
The Honorable Bill Cassidy  
The Honorable Robin Kelly  
The Honorable Carol Miller  
The Honorable Suzan DelBene  
The Honorable Beth Van Duyne  
The Honorable Jim Costa