
Education Committee

HB 2842

Brief Description: Requiring that organ donation awareness be taught in public schools.

Sponsors: Representatives B. Sullivan, Anderson, Quall, Tom, Chase and Simpson.

Brief Summary of Bill

- At least once in the ninth grade or later, every public school student must receive instruction regarding organ donation awareness.
- The cost of developing, distributing, and implementing the curriculum is paid by donations to the nonprofit foundation established by the two Washington state organ procurement organizations.

Hearing Date: 1/25/06

Staff: Sarah Ream (786-7303).

Background:

Washington's Uniform Anatomical Gift Act allows a person over 18 years old, or over 16 years old if also agreed upon in writing by his or her parent or guardian, to donate all or part of his or her body to another person. Such an organ donor may indicate his or her intent to donate by signing a "document of gift." This document may be a driver's license, a donor card, a will, or other written statement of the donor's intentions.

In 2003, the Legislature created an organ and tissue donor registry to facilitate organ and tissue donation. The Legislature also created the Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Account (Account). Funds for the Account come from donations by applicants for vehicle registration and other sources and are used for organ and tissue donation awareness programs. Periodically, the funds in the Account are transferred to the foundation for donation awareness established by the two Washington state organ procurement organizations.

Between 1988 and 2005, over 6,900 organ transplants were performed in Washington State, with 235 organ donations in 2005. Approximately 1,200 people in Washington need an organ donation. National statistics indicate that approximately half of the people listed for an organ transplant will not receive one due to the shortage of donated organs and that on average seventeen people die each day waiting for life-saving organ transplants.

Summary of Bill:

Requires all public school students to receive instruction regarding organ donation awareness, including instruction regarding the organ and tissue donor registry, at least once beginning in the ninth grade.

The costs of developing, distributing, and implementing the instruction regarding organ donation is paid by the foundation established by the Washington state organ procurement organizations.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 18, 2006.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.