



March 23, 2017

The Honorable Dean Heller
United States Senate
324 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

On behalf of the Association of the United States Navy, we would like to pledge our support for S. 115, the Veterans Transplant Coverage Act of 2017. This bill requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide organ transplants to veterans from a live donor regardless of whether or not that donor is a veteran.

Current VA policy excludes non-Veteran organ donations from coverage under the VA Choice Program and forces veterans to specific VA treatment facilities. For most veterans, these facilities are many states away.

This bill authorizes the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide for an operation on a live donor to carry out a transplant procedure for an eligible veteran notwithstanding that the live donor may not be eligible for VA health care, and provide for such an operation at a VA or non-VA facility. The VA shall furnish to such a donor any care or services that may be required before and after conducting with such procedure.

Today, there are more than 35,000 veterans who could potentially need a new kidney in their lifetime. Currently, veterans in need of kidney, liver, and other solid organ transplants are disqualified from the VA Choice Program if the available live donor is not a veteran. This bill ensures the veteran and the donor receive the most expedited care available.

Thank you for taking an active role in such an important issue to the Military and Veteran community by working to improve the lives and careers of those who served our great nation. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns at 703-548-5800 or at michael.little@ausn.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Joseph Little". To the right of the signature, there is a handwritten note in blue ink that says "ABH (AW/Sea) USNR".

Michael J. Little
Director of Legislative Affairs

