

## Steven Sepe

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**From:** Kathryn Richard <buffyrox@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 8, 2024 1:57 PM  
**To:** House State Government and Elections Committee  
**Subject:** Written Support for HB 8009

Katie Richard  
387 Wickenden St Apt 16  
Providence, RI 02903

My name is Katie Richard and I am testifying in support of HB 8009.

I have a genetic kidney disease called FSGS that caused my kidneys to fail by the time I turned 28 years old. I started dialysis and immediately started looking for a living donor. Unfortunately for me, after years of searching, I couldn't find anyone who was willing to donate to me, and I ended up receiving a deceased donor nearly 5 years later in 2022.

Dialysis is an extremely grueling process, and I had a multitude of complications while receiving treatment. Not to mention, it's extremely expensive, and I have thousands of dollars of medical debt because of it due to the many years that I was on it, including debt from hospital stays because of the complications with dialysis. While dialysis is a life saving treatment that I am grateful to have had, it is a temporary treatment that has debilitating side effects. I was fortunate enough to get the call to receive my transplant, but I have friends who unfortunately passed away on dialysis while waiting for theirs.

I support this bill because it would incentivize people to consider living donation and would help patients like me get off dialysis sooner. It could also help patients find a living donor sooner so they could potentially avoid dialysis altogether. The outcomes of kidney transplants with living donors vs deceased donors are far greater and give patients like me a better shot at living the healthiest and longest lives that we can. Studies show that living donors also go on to live healthier lives post donation as well.

We need to be doing everything in our power to incentivize living donation, as it is the best option for survival for patients with End Stage Renal Disease. I strongly urge passage of HB 8009 to make it easier for state workers to be able to donate organs, as any step that can make organ donations less burdensome the better, because every additional live donor means one significantly better life and health outcome for Rhode Islanders like me.

Sincerely,  
Katie Richard