

Date: Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2020

## PRESS RELEASE

Regarding

ACT Legislative Assembly:

**BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES REGISTRATION (TISSUE DONOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT) AMENDMENT BILL 2020.**

**An Act to Amend the Births, Death and Marriages Registration Act, 1997.**

As presented by Tara Cheyne (MLA for Ginninderra) on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2020 to the Legislative Assembly for the ACT. This amendment enables Tissue Donors (deceased donors of tissue and organs) to have their donation recognised on the death register, their death certificate, and makes available a letter of acknowledgement from the Chief Minister if requested by their family.

Donor Families Australia congratulate the ACT and especially thank MLA Tara Cheyne for her advocacy in bringing about **this nationally ground-breaking** Bill forward.

**If passed, for the first time in Australia**, tissue donation will be recorded on the death register, and in turn, on death certificates. It also legislates the possibility of formal recognition in a letter from the Chief Minister

- Many individuals and families will find comfort in this Bill that gives families the choice to enable their loved ones' donation to be recorded, acknowledged and respected.
- This means donation of tissue (encompassing all donations of any organs and tissue as defined in the ACT Transplantation and Anatomy Act (1978)).
- This Bill is retrospective, allowing all donor families who choose to -to have a record of the donation. This historical record is seen as important in recognising the deceased.

Donor Families Australia Chairman Bruce McDowell stated

“DFA endorse this nationally ground-breaking legislation and hope other jurisdictions will follow. It is wonderful that actions have been taken to align practice with community trust and hope. Donor families' voices have been heard. We thank Tara Cheyne for her compassion. We believe that this formal recognition will encourage more people to donate.

The introduction of this Bill followed a 2019 DFA conference where Donor Families and Recipients collaborated on ideas to increase donation and recognise donors. We are thrilled that steps are being taken to help the community recognise the value of organ and tissue donation following death.”

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Donor Families Australia Inc  
An independent support and advocacy network

# Our Inspiring Mission

**CARE | SUPPORT | ADVOCATE | EDUCATE**

Donor Families Australia seeks to continue the gift of donors to save the lives of suffering people in our community and to care for those who have donated. The organisation does this through its aims which are to provide care and support to families who have donated their loved one's organs and /or tissues; to advocate and give donor families a voice; to educate the community about the benefits of donation, whilst respecting, acknowledging and supporting those touched by donation decisions.

<https://www.donorfamiliesaustralia.org/>