

Health and Social Care Committee
Human Transplantation (Wales) Bill
HT(Ind)3 – Lee Darroch

For the attention of:

Mark Drakeford
Health and Social Committee
National Assembly
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

Dear Mr Drakeford,

I see that the Welsh government has announced plans to introduce presumed consent, or deemed consent, for organ donation. The proposal appears to be that people living in Wales for a period of six months or more will be opted-in automatically as organ donors.

These proposals reminded me of an article on this subject that I saved about four years ago. I have attached it in the hope that it might be helpful in your deliberations because I am sure that most people have no idea of what is involved in this process. So many things such as this are being pushed by politicians on to the general public who have no idea about the ramifications of what they are being asked to agree to. People are just thinking on a shallow, emotional level without any idea of the long-term consequences.

What I find quite scandalous is that politicians who are pushing this legislation of deemed consent are, in fact, telling the population that their bodies will belong to the state, and it is the state and the medical profession which will have primary control over a person's body when they die. Those who are pushing this legislation are telling people that they will commandeer their bodies when they die and pluck out what they want before returning the unwanted bits to the family for disposal. Without mincing words, this is the reality of what is being proposed. The individual and the family become of secondary importance (of no importance?) if the state wants a person's body. This is arrogance beyond belief and yet another example of the Godless state being imposed upon us. Where are all the Christians in the famous Welsh chapels to rise up against this? It is symptomatic of the eastern European communist states where the individual was unimportant and the state was all powerful. It is repugnant to the dignity of the body when someone approaches death, because it is when a person approaches death that the organs will be harvested, not when they are actually dead. Death occurs when the blood stops flowing in the veins. Any first year medical student will tell you this. But this is not acceptable for the removal of organs which must still have blood flowing through them; hence the person, quite clearly, is not 'dead'. 'Brain death' is not death, but a medically invented term to ensure that doctors get their hands on organs that are still living and viable.

If the government wishes to introduce presumed consent what is the situation regarding children under the age of 16? Will the state 'presume the consent' of youngsters who are under the legal age of consent? And what about people with mental illnesses who are unable to give presumed consent? Does the state intend to dismiss out of hand and ride roughshod the

wishes of parents and legal guardians who oppose this legislation? This smacks of totalitarianism and is a scenario too horrific to contemplate. History shows that the Welsh people (and the Scots and Irish) quite rightly resented the centuries-old domination of the English where they had no control over their own destiny. Is it not ironic, now that the Welsh finally have their own assembly, that their own politicians want to treat their own people with even greater contempt and remove that most basic of freedoms – the right of control over one's own body? Save us from politicians who become exhilarated with power and forget that they are the elected servants of the people; not their masters.

If there are not enough voluntary donors to satisfy the desires of the medical profession then so be it; this is called the will of the people. If the medical profession cannot convince the population to fill in their consent forms then so be it; they must accept that the people are not convinced. But what I find most distasteful about this business is when people at a time of great emotional distress are pleading for a transplant to save their loved one. The reality is that they want someone else's loved one to die so that the doctors can pluck organs from the deceased (or not quite completely deceased) so that their loved one can live. Where is the charity in this?

Please do not continue with this bill.

Leo Darroch.