

Health and Social Care Committee
Human Transplantation (Wales) Bill
HT(Ind)59 – Rev Dr Gareth Leyshon

Dear Health and Social Care Committee members,

I write in connection with the Welsh Government's proposed legislation on deemed consent for organ donation.

I am a registered organ donor, a science graduate (PhD from the University of Wales) and a Roman Catholic Parish Priest.

While I recognise that the proposed legislation would increase the availability of donor organs in Wales, I am deeply concerned that it violates a significant point of principle – that a human being's rights over their own body are so intrinsic that they cannot be appropriated by the state without explicit consent.

The public outcry over the retention of children's organs without consent some years ago indicated that human beings have a deep instinct about body parts being precious. That instinct should be recognised by acknowledging that explicit consent is required for parts of that body to be used even for the most altruistic purpose.

Surely the same outcome could be achieved by a "Required Request" scheme whereby every resident in Wales was explicitly required to state their desire to be a donor or not. This would not override the intrinsic dignity of the persons concerned.

I would also like to see the rights of immediate family members strengthened in the final legislation, to the extent that next-of-kin have the right of veto.

Yours Sincerely

Rev Dr Gareth Leyshon