December 17, 2020

Dear Secretary-Nominee Becerra,

As doctors and medical professionals from across this nation, as well as advocates for equity and evidenced-based policy, we write today to applaud critical steps towards accountability for organ procurement organizations (OPOs), the government monopoly contractors that run the nation’s organ donation system.

Thirty-three Americans die every day in need of an organ transplant, with a recent report supported by Schmidt Futures and Arnold Ventures showing the burdens of OPO failures fall disproportionately on patients of color. In fact, no OPO has ever lost a government contract, despite data from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) showing thousands of organs go unrecovered every year.

Reforms announced from HHS highlight that many of the nation’s OPOs fail basic accountability standards. With 500,000 Americans crowded into dialysis centers at added risk of COVID - and with COVID itself ravaging patients’ organs - it is more urgent than ever to facilitate as many transplants as possible.

This new rule fixes major flaws in OPO evaluation, moving from self-rAs doctors and medical professionals from across this nation, as well as advocates for equity and evidenced-based policy, we write today to applaud critical steps towards accountability for organ procurement organizations (OPOs), the government monopoly contractors that run the nation’s organ donation system.

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Reforms announced from HHS highlight that many reported to objective data, and allowing HHS, for the first time, to hold OPOs accountable. HHS projects reforms will save an additional 7,300 lives every year, as well as realign incentives to ensure that OPOs serve their entire communities.
In line with the Biden-Harris Administration’s commitment to racial equity, we encourage HHS to move swiftly to ensure that patients across the country are served by high-performing contractors, rather than wait until 2026 as suggested in the Final Rule. Patients are dying now and do not have years to wait, and a new report from the Bridgespan Group charts a clear roadmap for increasing organ availability through these new measures.

Patients cannot wait, and we call on the incoming Administration to ensure these lifesaving reforms are implemented immediately.

Sincerely,

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