



June 10, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Johnson, Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader Jeffries, Minority Leader McConnell,

We, the undersigned organizations, are all committed to ensuring a safe and available blood supply for every patient in need. We write to urge your support in making our blood supply a national priority and ensuring that blood is always available for those in need. It is crucial to take key actions to strengthen and diversify America's donor base.

1. Only 3% of Americans donate blood each year, a shockingly low statistics that puts patient care at risk. Recent FDA changes in donor eligibility have expanded the pool of eligible individuals, but funding is needed to ensure awareness of these changes and the overall need to donate blood. **I urge you to introduce legislation to provide targeted federal funding directly to blood centers to boost their education and awareness efforts, particularly among individuals from diverse communities and younger generations.**
2. Time is of the essence when it comes to blood transfusions following traumatic injuries. One study found up to five percent increased odds of mortality for every minute of delay in access to blood. However, without sufficient reimbursement for the cost of having blood available for patients in need, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) cannot provide life-saving transfusions. **I urge you to introduce legislation to establish a demonstration program through the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) to examine pre-hospital blood transfusion.**
3. Blood transfusions can be a vital part of end-of-life palliative care. Although CMS allows hospice to provide palliative transfusions, hospice providers rarely offer blood transfusions, even when they are essential palliative care, leading patients to delay enrolling in the Medicare hospice program or forego it altogether. The result is transfusion-dependent patients forego the holistic care hospice provides, resulting in dramatically lower end-of life quality measures at an increased cost to Medicare. **I urge you to co-sponsor S. 2186, the Improving Access to Transfusion Care for Hospice Patients Act or introduce companion legislation in the House to create a demonstration program through CMMI**

to allow reimbursement for palliative blood transfusions outside of the hospice benefit, ensuring that all patients receive the end of life care they need.

We appreciate your attention to this critical matter and eagerly await your prompt reply. If you have any questions, please contact Diane Calmus (202-654-2988, dcalmus@americasblood.org), Vice President of Government Affairs at America's Blood Centers. Together, let's make strengthening America's blood supply a national priority.

Alliance for Community Transfusion Services (ACTS)
ADRP: The Association for Blood Donor Professionals
America's Blood Centers
American Society for Clinical Pathology
American Society of Hematology
Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives
Blood Assurance
Blood Bank of Alaska
Blood Bank of Delmarva
Blood Bank of Hawaii
Blood Centers of America
Bloodworks Northwest
Central California Blood Center
Central Pennsylvania Blood Bank
Centerlink
Cerus
Children's Hospital Los Angeles
Civil Air Patrol
Coastal Bend Blood Center
Community Blood Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania & Western New York
Community Blood Center
Community Blood Center (Appleton)
Community Blood Center of the Ozarks
Connecticut Blood Center
ConnectLife
Crescent Foundation
Georgia Health Policy Center
GLAAD
Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center
HOSA Future Health Professionals
Houchin Community Blood Bank
Hoxworth Blood Center
Human Rights Campaign
ImpactLife
Inova Blood Donor Services
Kentucky Blood Center
LIFELINE Blood Services
LifeFactors
LifeServe Blood Center
LifeShare Blood Center
LifeSouth Community Blood Centers
LifeStream
Macopharma

MEDIC Regional Blood Center
Memorial Blood Centers
Miller-Keystone Blood Center
Mississippi Blood Services
National Bleeding Disorders Foundation
National Blood Testing Cooperative
Nebraska Community Blood Bank
New Jersey Blood Services
New York Blood Center
North Arundel County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated
Northern California Community Blood Bank
OneBlood
Operation Pulse Lift
Our Blood Institute
Rhode Island Blood Center
Rock River Valley Blood Center
San Diego Blood Bank
Shepard Community Blood Center
Sick Cells
Sickle Cell Foundation of Minnesota
Solvita
South Texas Blood & Tissue
Stanford Blood Center
SunCoast Blood Centers
Texoma Regional Blood Center
Terumo Blood and Cell Technologies
The Blood Center (New Orleans)
The Blood Connection
The Crescent Foundation
The Thrive with Pyruvate Kinase Deficiency Organization
The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center
Thalassemia International Federation
UCI Health Blood Donor Center
University Blood Initiative
Versiti
Vitalant
We Are Blood
Western Kentucky Regional Blood Center
Whitman-Walker Health