



Charlotte Woodward Organ Transplant Discrimination Prevention Act

The Problem

An organ transplant is a surgery to replace a damaged or failing organ, such as a heart or liver, with a healthy one from a donor. Unfortunately, individuals with Down syndrome and other disabilities can face discrimination in the healthcare system when they need an organ transplant. In fact, a report published by the National Council on Disability (NCD) showed that people with disabilities have been denied lifesaving transplants because of mistaken beliefs and biased attitudes about disability.

Even though this type of discrimination is illegal, patients with disabilities continue to be denied lifesaving organ transplants. This has an especially serious impact on the Down syndrome community because individuals with Down syndrome are more likely to have heart conditions that may require heart transplantation.

The Solution

The Charlotte Woodward Organ Transplant Discrimination Prevention Act builds on existing laws to make clear that disability-based discrimination in the organ transplant system is not allowed. This will help individuals with Down syndrome and other disabilities to get the lifesaving healthcare that they need.

The bill would also make it easier and faster for people who have experienced discrimination related to organ transplantation to receive answers and help from the federal government.

For more information, please contact our policy team at policy@ndss.org.