

Health and Social Care Committee
Human Transplantation (Wales) Bill
HT(Ind)109 - David Jones

FAO Sarah Sargent
Deputy Clerk
Health and Social Committee
National Assembly for Wales

18/01/2013

Dear Sarah,

RE: The Welsh Assembly Health and Social Care Committee consultation on presumed consent for organ donation.

Having looked at the proposals I would like to express my concerns as I can't find acceptable answers to a number of serious issues.

In my opinion the best course of action would be to undertake a concerted campaign to encourage organ donation and other voluntary activities thereby achieving the aims of this proposal and maintain the spirit in which they are offered.

If I understand it correctly the state would effectively have property over the body and this has chilling connotations. It is easy to see how this could be extended to making decisions based on "quality of life" and who is deemed fit to carry on living etc. This question can be raised about when to end someone's life in the case of accident, terminal illness or life-support where their organs may, possibly, be of use to someone else. Who decides and how and by what authority? How are the wishes of the family taken into account and what priority is given to these? Are there any long-term guarantees?

I am not convinced that more organs will become available because there are so many practical variables involved and would like to see more evidence of this and of how many organs will be used for experiment and investigation rather than for transplant.

It is also of concern that what is currently a conscious decision to try to do something to help others would now, effectively, be undertaken by the state on our behalf. Not only does this imply the state deciding how we must think but removes the ability to make what many consider to be a caring and compassionate choice. That is to say it removes from people the opportunity to act in accordance with their conscience to do something they believe to be beneficial to other members of the community and it prevents family members from choosing to keep the body of their loved-one intact. This has harmful consequences as it diminishes the value of conscience and may lead us to a mindset that we need not be concerned about anything unless instructed by the state.

yours sincerely

David Jones