



February 15, 2023

Re: SB 71, Glory's Bill

Members of the New Mexico Legislature:

As the leading human rights organization for all individuals with Down syndrome, the National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) strongly supports the passage of SB 71, also known as Glory's law, which will promote health equity throughout the organ transplant system for people with disabilities.

The bill prohibits discrimination based solely on disability before, during, and after an organ transplant procedure. This legislation reinforces and supplements rights established or supported by existing civil rights laws, most notably the Americans with Disabilities Act, Sec. 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Sec. 1557 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Despite existing civil rights protections, individuals with Down syndrome and other disabilities continue to face both willful and unintended discrimination in organ transplantation, limiting their access to health care when they need it most. At the same time, healthcare providers need clarity and guidance about how to account for and accommodate disability in their practice. This legislation addresses both issues by spelling out what is and is not allowed and providing new avenues for families to seek relief.

There are currently laws against organ transplant discrimination in 36 states: Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Mississippi, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, West Virginia and Wyoming. It is time for the state of New Mexico to follow suit.

NDSS envisions a world in which all people with Down syndrome could enhance their quality of life, realize their life aspirations, and become valued members of welcoming communities. We hope that the New Mexico state legislature shares our commitment to eliminating discrimination based on disability. Thank you for your leadership on this important piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

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