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# GREENS CALL FOR ORGAN DONOR OPT-OUT SYSTEM TO BE INVESTIGATED

## *As National DonateLife Week Commences*

**Paul 'Basil' O'Halloran MP**  
Greens Health spokesperson

**Monday, 21 February 2011**

**For Comment: Mike Cain, Media Officer, 0428 510 641**

**[mps.tas.greens.org.au](http://mps.tas.greens.org.au)**

The Tasmanian Greens today reiterated their call for the State to investigate introducing an opt-out system for organ donations following recent statistics showing that 19.7 donations per million Tasmanians donate their organs.

Greens Health spokesperson Paul 'Basil' O'Halloran MP said that in DonateLife week it is important to reflect on the need to increase organ donations, and the lives lost because of a lack of a suitable donor. Mr O'Halloran also said that the great work done throughout Australia by DonateLife in assisting those Australians in unfortunate situations where they require organ transplants to live, should be supported.

"If we wish to increase the number of donors we need to seriously consider the possibility of an opt-out system similar to the Western Australian proposal late last year, and I am calling on both Labor and Liberal to support investigating a similar system," Mr O'Halloran said.

"Last year 309 donors in Australia donated 931 organs, which is fantastic, however there are still over 1700 people on current waiting lists who may be waiting of up to four years to receive a suitable donation, and in Tasmania there were 19.7 donations per million made."<sup>1</sup>

"By investigating the feasibility of opt-out organ donation, we have the potential to increase the number of organ and tissue donors for in-need Tasmanians, reduce waiting list times and save more lives."

"The shortfall in suitably donated organs costs lives, and we need to address the situation by making it something that is discussed proactively within our community, as well as making it easier to become an identified donor."

"The gift of life through organ donation is something many people want to give should tragedy strike them, but the current system that requires each individual to opt in means that a majority just never get round to it."

"Many Tasmanians believe that because they ticked the box on their drivers licence they are now donors, but in fact this is not the case."

We must give serious consideration to an opt-out system, which would mean that those who don't want to be donors opt-out, and otherwise everyone is in."

"Despite there being an Upper House Committee Inquiry into organ donation schemes in 2008, little has been done to investigate the merits of an opt-out scheme," Mr O'Halloran said.

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**Attachments:**

<sup>1</sup>DonateLife\_Fact Sheet\_Feb2011.pdf (2 pages)