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***APRIL IS DMV/DONATE LIFE CALIFORNIA MONTH,***

**For Immediate Release**

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**DONATE LIFE CALIFORNIA LAUNCHES  
MAJOR STATEWIDE ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN TO INSPIRE  
ORGAN AND TISSUE DONOR REGISTRATIONS**

**Campaign Targets African American, Asian, and Latino Communities**

**Oakland, CA – April 2, 2007** – More than 90 percent of Americans believe that organ, eye and tissue donation is the right thing to do. Yet only 30 percent of those same individuals have legally and properly recorded their decision to donate. In many minority communities, the gap is often greater. The California State Organ & Tissue Donor Registry is embarking on its first-ever statewide media campaign designed to increase organ donations and registry sign-ups within California's communities of color.

For the Donate Life California Organ and Tissue Donor Registry, April is the right time to launch a \$3 million statewide media campaign targeted specifically to African American, Asian, and Latino communities in eight major markets: Sacramento, Oakland, San Francisco, Stockton, Monterey/Salinas, Los Angeles and San Diego. The radio, television, billboard and transit ads will begin in April, which is National Donate Life Month, and will run for four weeks to highlight the stories of real transplant recipients within California.

According to David Heneghan, Public Affairs Manager, California Transplant Donor Network, two-thirds of the nearly 20,000 Californians on the waiting list for transplants belong to these communities. Approximately 33% (6,528) are Latino, 17% (3,290) are Asian/Pacific Islander, and 14% (2,792) are African American. Funding for the campaign was made available by a one-time gift from the Kaiser Foundation.

"It's imperative to reach these communities to increase knowledge and inspire donation," said Heneghan. "By reaching out to communities via the media that reach them, we hope to encourage signups on the Donate Life California Organ and Tissue Donor Registry. Californians can sign up quickly and easily at local Department of Motor Vehicles offices across the state when they apply for or renew their drivers licenses or ID cards. Signing up on the registry and obtaining the well-known pink dot is a simple way for those in at-risk communities to support life-giving donation. It's a chance for neighbor to help neighbor."

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Within California and across the nation, minorities are hard hit by hypertension, diabetes, and kidney disorders – diseases that can lead to organ failure. Increasing the availability of minority donors translates into lives saved within those communities. The best matches between donors and recipients often lie between members of the same race. Currently, the lack of minority organ donors decreases the number of well-matched kidneys and pancreases available for minority recipients. Locally, campaign spots will be aired on [insert radio and TV stations], some of which have provided additional support through their on-air personalities. Approximately 24 billboards and transit ads will also be seen during the next four weeks.

“We hope this campaign will prompt all Californians to make the commitment to donate life and sign up on the registry,” said Heneghan. “Every community has people waiting desperately for someone to say ‘yes’ to donation.”

Since its launch in April 2005, more than 1.2 million Californians have signed up with the Donate Life California Organ & Tissue Donor Registry. For more information about the registry, the process, and how donation saves and improves lives, visit: [www.donateLIFecalifornia.org](http://www.donateLIFecalifornia.org) or [www.doneVIDAcalifornia.org](http://www.doneVIDAcalifornia.org).

*Donate Life California is a nonprofit, state-authorized organ and tissue donor registry, administered by California’s four nonprofit, federally designated organ recovery organizations, each responsible for facilitating the donation process in the state: California Transplant Donor Network, Golden State Donor Services, Lifesharing, and OneLegacy. As a state-authorized public service, the registry assures that all personal information is kept confidential and stored in a secure database, accessible only to authorized organ and tissue recovery personnel.*

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