

STATE SENATOR • JOHN J. GLEASON • 27TH DISTRICT

Gleason Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Sept. 4, 2007

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Senator Gleason, Governor Granholm, and Gift of Life Michigan Promote Organ Donation at Mackinac Bridge Walk

LANSING—Senator John Gleason (D-Flushing) and representatives from Gift of Life Michigan joined Governor Granholm to promote organ donation yesterday at the annual Labor Day Mackinac Bridge Walk. Senator Gleason and Governor Granholm spoke with Gift of Life volunteers, organ transplant recipients, and donor families from around the state prior to their trek across the bridge and shared the message of *Be a Hero, Show Us Your Heart* to promote the state's new organ donation program..

“I wouldn't be able to walk across this bridge today if I hadn't received a donated kidney, so I know firsthand how important the heroic, lifesaving efforts of Gift of Life Michigan and the people who donate are,” said Sen. Gleason. “I'm proud to join the Governor to share the importance of organ donation and encourage Michigan residents to ‘show us their heart’ and register to become a donor.”

Senator Gleason was the driving force behind the new heart insignia law that went into effect January 1, 2007. The new law prompts all Michigan residents to sign up or update their entry on the Michigan Organ Donor Registry and receive a heart sticker for their driver's license or state ID. Since the first of the year, the Donor Registry has grown by over 100,000 Michiganders to a total of 1.2 million registered donors since the registry's inception in 1994.

While Governor Granholm ceremoniously marked the 50th anniversary of the Mackinac Bridge Walk this Labor Day, she and Senator Gleason also joined Gift of Life Michigan to celebrate more than 50 years of organ transplantation. Fittingly, one organ and tissue donor can save and enhance the lives of 50 people. A single organ donor can save the lives of up to eight people by donating their heart, lungs, liver, kidneys, pancreas, and intestines. One tissue donor can improve the lives of more than 50 people by donating eyes, bone, soft tissue, heart valves, veins and skin.

“It's my pleasure to recognize the dramatic impact of organ and tissue donation at the Mackinac Bridge Walk this Labor Day,” said Governor Granholm. “We must do all we can to promote the tremendous gift of life.”

To learn more about organ and tissue donation or to sign up on the Michigan Organ Donor Registry, visit giftoflifemichigan.org or call Gift of Life Michigan at 800-482-4881.

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