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North Dakota Department of Transportation Launches New Online Registry for Organ and Tissue Donors

Bismarck, ND (Nov. 17, 2009) – The North Dakota Department of Transportation has launched a new online registry where citizens can register their decision to be an organ and tissue donor. Historically, North Dakotans had to make this designation on their driver's license or state identification card. The launch of the new registry provides an additional opportunity for individuals 14 years of age and older to securely and privately document their decision to be a donor from any computer with internet access.

The new registry is in memory of Alexa Kersting, a 14 year-old girl from West Fargo who died while waiting for a lung transplant in 2004. The goal of the registry is to make it easier for all North Dakotans to save lives through organ and tissue donation so that other families don't have to endure the loss of a loved one due to a lack of available organs for transplant.

North Dakota has one of the highest donor registration rates in the country, with 64% of licensed drivers choosing to give the gift of life through donation. First Lady Mikey Hoeven was at Memorial Hall this morning for the launch of the registry and applauded the generous spirit of the state's citizens. She also encouraged all North Dakotans to consider the life-saving gifts of organ and tissue donation, especially during the upcoming holiday season.

Susan Gunderson, Chief Executive Officer of LifeSource, was also at Memorial Hall to celebrate the launch of the new registry and applauded its development. "We are so proud of the leadership of the state of North Dakota, the Department of Transportation and all of our hospital and community leaders in making this great state a shining example of generosity and giving."

More than 2,700 people in the Upper Midwest are waiting for a life-saving organ transplant and approximately 18 people die each day because there are not enough organs for everyone who needs one. One donor can save up to 60 lives through the gifts of organ and tissue donation. North Dakotans are encouraged to get the facts about donation, check the box on their driver's license or register online at <https://secure.apps.state.nd.us/dot/dlts/dlos/donorChange.htm>, and share their decision with their family. More information about donation, as well as a link to the online registry, can be found at www.DonateLifeND.org.