

TWENTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
Territory of the Virgin Islands
REGULAR/SPECIAL SESSION 20____
ROLL CALL

Bill No. 23-0191

Date: 6/19/00

Short Title: To amend title 19, Chapter 20, Virgin Islands Code, to provide for the enactment of the Virgin Islands Uniform Anatomical Gift Act, and for other purposes related thereto

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

- (a) Introduced and sent to Committee on.....Date.....
(b) Reported from Committee and sent to Rules on.....
(c) Reported from Committee on Rules.....
(d) Recalled from Committee by Special Order.....
(e) Adopted on.....
(f) Rejected on.....
(g) Vetoed by Governor on.....
(h) Reconsidered by Legislature and passed or rejected over Governor's Veto on.....

Adopted
6/19/00

MEMBERS	YEA	NAY	NOT VOTING	ABSENT
BENNERSON, Gregory A.	1			
BERRY, Lorraine L.	2			
BRYAN, Adelbert M.			1	
OLE, Donald "Ducks"	3			
DAVID, Roosevelt St. C.	4			
DONASTORG, Adlah "Foncie"	5			
GOLDEN, Violet Anne	6			
GOMEZ, Judy M.				1
GOODWIN, George E.	7			
HANSEN, Alicia "Chucky"	8			
JN. BAPTISTE, Norman	9			
JONES, David S.				2
LIBURD, Almando "Rocky"	10			
PETRUS, Allie-Allison				3
RICHARDS Vargrave A.	11			

Certified true and correct

Helen M. O'Neil
CLERK

05/25/00 – AMENDED AND REPORTED OUT FROM THE COMMITTEE ON RULES TO THE FLOOR
03/10/00 – AMENDED AND REPORTED OUT TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

BILL NO. 23-0191**Twenty-Third Legislature of the Virgin Islands
of the United States**

NOVEMBER 10, 1999

To amend title 19, chapter 20, Virgin Islands Code, to provide for the enactment of the Virgin Islands Uniform Anatomical Gift Act, and for other purposes related thereto

PROPOSED BY:

Senators Allie-Allison Petrus, Lorraine L. Berry, Violet Anne Golden
Donald "Ducks" Cole, Almando "Rocky" Liburd, Judy M. Gomez,
Vargrave A. Richards and Gregory A. Bennerson

1 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:

2 **SECTION 1.** Title 19, chapter 20, Virgin Islands Code, is repealed and a new
3 chapter 20 is added to read as follows:

4 "Chapter 20. Virgin Islands Uniform Anatomical Gift Act
5

6 **Section 401. Short Title**

7 This chapter may be cited as the "Virgin Islands Uniform Anatomical Gift Act".

8 **Section 402. Definitions.**

9 In this chapter:
10

- (1) "Anatomical gift" means a donation of all or part of a human body to take effect upon or after death.
- (2) "Decedent" means a deceased individual and includes a stillborn infant or fetus.
- (3) "Document of gift" means a card, a statement attached to or imprinted on a motor vehicle operator's, a will, or other writing used to make an anatomical gift.
- (4) "Donor" means an individual who makes an anatomical gift of all or part of the individual's body.
- (5) "Enucleator" means an individual who is licensed and certified by the Virgin Islands Board of Optometrical Examiners to remove or process eyes or parts of eyes.
- (6) "Hospital" means a facility licensed, accredited or approved as a hospital under the law of the territory or of any state, or a facility operated as a hospital by the United States government, a territory, state or subdivision of a state
- (7) "Part" means an organ, tissue, eye, bone, artery, blood, fluid, or other portion of a human body.
- (8) "Person" means an individual, corporation, business trust, estate, trust, partnership, joint venture, association, government, governmental subdivision or agency, or any other legal or commercial entity.
- (9) "Physician" or "surgeon" means an individual licensed or otherwise authorized to practice medicine and surgery or osteopathy and surgery under the laws and regulations of the Virgin Islands or in cases of organs that will be

recovered for transplantation outside of the U.S. Virgin Islands under the auspices of the United Network for Organ Sharing, and individual licensed or otherwise authorized to practice medicine and surgery under the laws or regulations of any state.

(10) "Procurement organization" means a person licensed, accredited, or approved under the laws of the Virgin Islands and for the procurement, distribution, or storage of human bodies or parts with a U.S. Department of Health's Health Care Financing Administration designated Organ Procurement Organization for the service area that includes the U.S. Virgin Islands.

(11) "State" includes the Virgin Islands, any state of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and any territory of possession subject to the legislative authority of the United States.

(12) "Technician" means an individual who is licensed and certified by the Virgin Islands Board of Optometrical Examiners to remove or process a part or a coordinator working with the designated Organ Procurement Organization.

Section 403. Making, Amending, Revoking, and Refusing to make Anatomical Gifts by Individual

(a) An individual who is at least 18 years of age may (1) make an anatomical gift for any of the purposes stated in section 407(a)(2), limit an anatomical gift to one or more of those purposes, or (3) refuse to make an anatomical gift.

(b) An anatomical gift may be made only by a document of gift signed by the donor. If the donor cannot sign, the document of gift must be signed by another individual and by two witnesses, all of whom have signed at the direction and in the presence of the donor and of one another, and state that it has been so signed.

(c) If a document of gift is attached to or imprinted on a donor's motor vehicle operator's, or chauffeur's license, the document of gift must comply with subsection (b). Revocation, suspension, expiration, or cancellation of the license does not invalidate the anatomical gift.

(d) A document of gift may designate a particular physician or surgeon to carry out the appropriate procedures. In the absence of a designation, or if the designee is not available, the donee or other person authorized to accept the anatomical gift may employ or authorize any physician, surgeon, technician, or enucleator to carry out the appropriate procedures.

(e) An anatomical gift by will takes effect upon death of the testator, whether or not the will is probated. If, after death, the will is declared invalid for testamentary purposes, the validity of the anatomical gift is unaffected.

(f) A donor may amend or revoke an anatomical gift, not made by will, only by:

(1) a signed statement;

(2) an oral statement made in the presence of two individuals;

(3) any form of communication during a terminal illness or injury addressed to a physician or surgeon; or

(4) the delivery of a signed statement to a specified donee to whom a document of gift had been delivered.

(g) The donor of an anatomical gift made by will may amend or revoke the gift in the manner provided for amendment or revocation of wills, or as provided in subsection (f).

(h) An anatomical gift that is not revoked by the donor before death is irrevocable and does not require the consent or concurrence of any person after the donor's death.

(1) An individual may refuse to make an anatomical gift of the individual's body or part by (A) a writing signed in the same manner as a document of gift, (B) a statement attached to or imprinted on a donor's motor vehicle operator's, or (C) any other writing used to identify the individual as refusing to make an anatomical gift.

(2) During a terminal illness or injury, the refusal may be an oral statement or other form of communication.

(j) In the absence of contrary indications by the donor, an anatomical gift of a part is neither a refusal to give other parts nor a limitation on an anatomical gift under section 404 on a removal or release of other parts under section 405.

(k) In the absence of contrary indications by the donor, a revocation or amendment of an anatomical gift is not a refusal to make another anatomical gift. If the donor intends a revocation to be a refusal to make an anatomical gift, the donor shall make the refusal pursuant to subsection (i).

Section 404. Making, revoking, and objecting to anatomical gifts by others

(a) Any member of the following classes of persons, in the order of priority listed, may make an anatomical gift of all or a part of the decedent's body for an authorized purpose, unless the decedent, at the time of death, has made an unrevoked refusal to make that anatomical gift:

- (1) the spouse of the decedent;
- (2) an adult son or daughter of the decedent;
- (3) either parent of the decedent;
- (4) an adult brother or sister of the decedent;
- (5) a grandparent of the decedent; and

(6) a guardian of the person of the decedent at the time of death.

(b) An anatomical gift may not be made by a person listed in subsection (a) if:

(1) a person in a prior class is available at the time of death to make an anatomical gift;

(2) the person proposing to make an anatomical gift knows of a refusal or contrary indications by the decedent; or

(3) the person proposing to make an anatomical gift knows of an objection to making an anatomical gift by a member of the person's class or a prior class.

(c) An anatomical gift by a person authorized under subsection (a) must be made by (1) a document of gift signed by the person or (2) the person's telegraphic, recorded telephonic, or other recorded message, or other form of communication from the person that is contemporaneously reduced to writing and signed by the recipient and witnessed by one other individual.

(d) An anatomical gift by a person authorized under subsection (a) may be revoked by any member of the same or a prior class if, before procedures have begun for the removal of a part from the body of the decedent, the physician, surgeon, technician, or enucleator removing the part knows of the revocation.

(e) A failure to make an anatomical gift under subsection (a) is not an objection to the making of an anatomical gift.

Section 405. Authorization by medical examiner

(a) The medical examiner may release and permit the removal of a part from a body within his custody, for transplantation or therapy, if:

(1) the medical examiner has received a request for the part from a hospital, physician, surgeon, or procurement organization;

(2) the medical examiner has made a reasonable effort, taking into account the useful life of the part, to locate and examine the decedent's medical records and inform persons listed in section 403(a) of their option to make, or object to making, an anatomical gift;

(3) the medical examiner does not know of a refusal or contrary indication by the decedent or objection by a person having priority to act as listed in section 404(a);

(4) the removal will be by a physician, surgeon, or technician; but in the case of eyes, by one of them or by an enucleator;

(5) the removal will not interfere with any autopsy or investigation;

(6) the removal will be in accordance with accepted medical standards; and

(7) cosmetic restoration will be done, if appropriate.

(b) If the body is not within the custody of the medical examiner, the Procurement Organization may remove any part from a body for transplantation or therapy if the requirements of subsection (a) are otherwise met.

(c) The hospital or its designee shall maintain a permanent record of the name of the decedent, the person making the request, the date and purpose of the request, the part requested, and the person to whom it was released.

Section 406. Routine inquiry and required request; search and notification

(a) If, at or near the time of death of a patient, there is no medical record that the patient has made or refused to make an anatomical gift, the Chief Executive Officer of the hospital or a representative designated by the Chief Executive Officer shall make the referral to the designated Medicare Procurement Organization pursuant to Medicare's Conditions for Participation, who shall discuss the option to make or refuse to make an

anatomical gift and request the making of an anatomical gift pursuant to Section 403(a). The request must be made with reasonable discretion and sensitivity to the circumstances of the family. A request is not required if the gift is not suitable, based upon accepted medical standards, for a purpose specified in Section 407. An entry must be made in the medical record of the patient, stating the name and affiliation of the individual making the request, and of the name, response, and relationship to the patient of the person to whom the request was made. The Commissioner of Health shall promulgate rules and regulations to implement this subsection.

(b) The following persons shall make a reasonable search for a document of gift or other information identifying the bearer as a donor or as an individual who has refused to make an anatomical gift:

- (1) a law enforcement officer, fireman, paramedic, or other emergency rescuer finding an individual who the searcher believes is dead, or near death; and
- (2) a hospital, upon the admission of an individual at or near the time of death, if there is not immediately available any other source of that information.

(c) If a document of gift or evidence of refusal to make an anatomical gift is located by the search required by paragraph (1) of this subsection, and the individual or body to whom it relates is taken to a hospital, the hospital must be notified of the contents and the document or other evidence must be sent to the hospital.

(d) If, at or near the time of death of a patient, a hospital knows that an anatomical gift has been made pursuant to section 403(a) or a release and removal of a part has been permitted pursuant to section 405, or that a patient or an individual identified as in transit to the hospital is a donor, the hospital shall notify the donee if one is named and known to the hospital; if not, it shall notify the U.S. Department of Health's Health Care Finance

Administration designated procurement organization. The hospital shall cooperate in the implementation of the anatomical gift or release and removal of a part.

(e) A person who fails to discharge the duties imposed by this section is not subject to criminal or civil liability but is subject to appropriate administrative sanctions.

Section 407. Persons who may become; purposes for which anatomical gifts may be made

(a) The following persons may become donees of anatomical gifts for the purposes stated:

- (1) a hospital, physician, surgeon, or procurement organization, for transplantation, therapy, medical or dental education, research, or advancement of medical or dental science;
- (2) an accredited medical or dental school, college, or university for education, research, advancement of medical or dental science; or
- (3) a designated individual for transplantation or therapy needed by that individual.

(b) An anatomical gift may be made to a designated donee or without designating a donee. If a donee is not designated, or if the donee is not available, or rejects the anatomical gift, the anatomical gift may be accepted by any hospital.

(c) If the donee knows of the decedent's refusal or contrary indications to make an anatomical gift or that an anatomical gift by a member of a class having priority to act is opposed by a member of the same class or a prior class under section 404(a), the donee may not accept the anatomical gift.

Section 408. Delivery of document of gift.

(a) Delivery of a document of gift during the donor's lifetime is not required for the validity of an anatomical gift.

(b) If an anatomical gift is made to a designated donee, the document of gift, or a copy, may be delivered to the donee to expedite the appropriate procedures after death.

(c) The document of gift, or a copy, may be deposited in any hospital, procurement organization, or registry office that accepts it for safekeeping or for facilitation of procedures after death. On request of an interested person, upon or after the donor's death, the person in possession shall allow the interested person to examine or copy the document of gift.

Section 409. Rights and duties at death

(a) Rights of a donee created by an anatomical gift are superior to rights of others except with respect to autopsies under Section 412(b). A donee may accept or reject an anatomical gift. If a donee accepts an anatomical gift of an entire body, the donee, subject to the terms of the gift, may allow embalming and use of the body in funeral services. If the gift is of a part of a body, the donee, upon the death of the donor and before embalming, shall cause the part to be removed without unnecessary mutilation. After removal of the part, custody of the remainder of the body vests in the person under obligation to dispose of the body.

(b) The time of death must be determined by a physician or surgeon who attends the donor at death or, if none, the physician or surgeon who certifies the death. Neither the physician nor surgeon who attends the donor at death, nor the physician or surgeon who determines the time of death, may participate in the procedures for removing or

transplanting a part unless the document of gift designates a particular physician or surgeon pursuant to section 403(d).

(c) If there has been an anatomical gift, a technician may remove any donated parts and an enucleator may remove any donated eyes or parts of eyes, after determination of death by a physician or surgeon.

Section 410. Coordination of procurement and use

Each hospital in this territory, after consultation with other hospitals and procurement organizations, shall establish agreements or affiliations for coordination of procurement and use of human bodies and parts.

Section 411. Sale or purchase of parts prohibited

(a) A person may not knowingly, for valuable consideration, purchase or sell a part for transplantation or therapy, if removal of the part is intended to occur after the death of the decedent.

(b) Valuable consideration does not include reasonable payment for the removal, processing, disposal, preservation, quality control, storage, transportation, or implantation of a part.

(c) A person who violates this section is guilty of a felony and upon conviction is subject to a fine not exceeding \$50,000 or imprisonment not exceeding five years, or both.

Section 412. Examination, autopsy, liability

(a) An anatomical gift authorizes any reasonable examination necessary to assure medical acceptability of the gift for the purposes intended.

(b) The provisions of this chapter are subject to the laws of this territory governing autopsies.

(c) A hospital, physician, surgeon, medical examiner, enucleator, technician, or other person, who acts in accordance with this chapter or with the applicable anatomical gift law of another state or a foreign country or attempts in good faith to do so is not liable for that act in a civil action or criminal proceeding.

(d) An individual who makes an anatomical gift pursuant to section 403 or 404 and the individual's estate are not liable for any injury or damage that may result from the making or the use of the anatomical gift.

Section 413. Transitional provisions

This chapter applies to a document of gift, revocation, or refusal to make an anatomical gift signed by the donor or a person authorized to make or object to making an anatomical gift before, on, or after the effective date of this Act.

Section 414. Uniformity of application and construction

This chapter shall be applied and construed to effectuate its general purpose to make uniform the law with respect to the subject of this chapter among states enacting it.

Section 415. Severability

If any provision of this chapter or its application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or applications of this chapter which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this chapter are severable.”

SECTION 2. Title 20, chapter 35, section 373 is amended by adding subsection (e) to read: “(e) At the request of the applicant for an operator’s license under this section, a document of anatomical gift shall be imprinted on the applicant’s operator’s license. Such documentation of anatomical gift must comply with the requirements of title 19, chapter 20, section 403 (b), of this Code.”

SECTION 3. Section 1 of this Act shall take effect thirty days after its enactment.

BR99-1069/ October 14, 1999/ :cdj
Reviewed by: CEK

Humanine 23-546 to Bill #
TWENTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
 Territory of the Virgin Islands
 REGULAR/SPECIAL SESSION 20*23*
 ROLL CALL

Bill No. *23-0191*

Date: *6/19/00*

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Post 6/19/00

MEMBERS	YEA	NAY	NOT VOTING	ABSENT
BENNERSON, Gregory A.	<i>1</i>			
BERRY, Lorraine L.	<i>2</i>			
BRYAN, Adelbert M.				<i>1</i>
OLE, Donald "Ducks"	<i>3</i>			
DAVID, Roosevelt St. C.	<i>4</i>			
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Certified true and correct

Glencia M. Pule
 CLERK