



Advancing Transfusion and
Cellular Therapies Worldwide

**AABB Letter to the Editor of the *Wall Street Journal*
Response to Editorial Entitled “Money for Marrow, Finally”
Published on August 14, 2017**

Making Tissue Donations Safe and Available

Policies allowing donors to be paid for the act of providing their bone marrow cells may endanger both donor and patient safety.

AABB (formerly known as the American Association of Blood Banks) is concerned that policies allowing donors to be paid for the act of providing their bone marrow cells may endanger both donor and patient safety. Your editorial “[Money for Marrow, Finally](#)” (Aug. 8) doesn’t mention that under existing policy donors are compensated for any out-of-pocket costs or lost work that they may experience because of their choice to donate. Thus, the issue raised in the editorial is whether federal policy should allow donors to be paid above and beyond this compensation for the act of providing cells for transplant.

In collaboration with experts in the field, the AABB develops standards that help ensure that individuals donating cells are free from infectious diseases. Importantly, there is substantial evidence that suggests that people who want to sell their body parts are more likely to withhold relevant medical information; such omissions could lead to increased health risks for patients. In other words, sellers influenced by financial gain could ignore the health risks associated with donation, which could reduce the safety of these lifesaving medical treatments.

Further, changing the law to allow marrow donors to be compensated would undoubtedly harm Americans’ chances of finding a match and would be particularly detrimental to patients with diverse backgrounds who benefit from our nation’s involvement in the world-wide search process. If the U.S. allows donor compensation, the nation would no longer adhere to international standards for volunteer donors in cellular therapies. As a result, American patients would no longer be eligible to be matched with international donors.

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