

HAARETZ

New bill aims to make Israelis organ donors by default

'The bill will not only expand the organ supply but achieve a conceptual change in Israeli society,' Meretz chief Zahava Gal-On says.

By [Ido Efrati](#) | Nov. 7, 2013 | 5:27 PM



A surgical team works on a transplant. Photo by AP

MKs have submitted a bill that would make organ donation the default choice for Israelis after death - anyone who did not sign a refusal form would be considered automatically agreeing to donate organs for transplant.

The bill was submitted this week by one left-leaning and one centrist MK - Meretz chairwoman Zahava Gal-On and Kadima's Israel Hasson.

The committee promoting organ donation in Israel, headed by Prof. Dina Ben Yehuda and appointed by Health Minister Yael German, is expected to submit its recommendations in about a month. The committee's recommendations will serve as a basis for a government bill, but Gal-On and Hasson decided to submit their own proposal.

"The bill will not only expand the organ supply but achieve a conceptual change in Israeli society," Gal-On told Haaretz. "The change of default choice is based on the principle of mutual responsibility. Consent to donate organs is a kind of mutual

insurance for anyone who won't expressly refuse to donate. This insurance will also mean that people not refusing to donate their organs will be preferred in the organ queue."

The bill, which consists of amendments to the current organ-donation law, would not apply to Israelis 17 and under, for whom parental consent would be required. Also, the bill stipulates that only a consenting Israeli's parent, sibling, child or spouse could block an organ donation, not a more distant relative. Finally, Israelis would be able to stipulate which of their organs would be off-limits for donation.

The legislation remains the same on one measure: If an organ is available for transplant, preference goes to candidates open to donating their organs, unless a nonconsenting patient urgently needs an organ. If there are two candidates in such a condition, preference goes to the patient open to donating his organs.