



JOSEPH F. VITALE
Senator, 19th District

HERB CONAWAY, MD
Assemblyman, 7th District

Date: December 7, 2009

To: New Jersey Legislature

Re: **National Blood Donor Month – January, 2010**

We invite you to join us as we celebrate National Blood Donor Month this January 2010 by helping us encourage donors to give or pledge to give blood throughout the month. Specifically, we are asking for your attendance at blood drives occurring in your district, all being held as part of an overall coordinated effort that will take place across New Jersey during January to call attention to this important issue.

Meeting the transfusion needs of our patients becomes increasingly difficult each day. In 2008, New Jersey needed almost 35,000 more units of blood than it collected and had to purchase it from other states. Did you know that nine out of 10 New Jersey residents will need blood some time in their lives? Chronic shortages have become a way of life in our hospital blood banks and transfusion services departments, affecting our overall hospital operations and ultimately, patient care. Blood is considered a strategic resource, and with less than a two-day supply at most times throughout the year, our patients are vulnerable to any disruption of our ability to collect or import products.

While times of disaster generate higher donor rates, New Jersey is in need of a consistent, reliable source of blood. As you probably know, hospitals and blood centers are experiencing unprecedented problems associated with donor recruitment. For this reason we have once again come together to create a collaborative statewide campaign to bring attention to this issue. Similar campaigns in years past have yielded tremendous results. We're hoping for the same during this coming year. Your constituents will be hosting drives at fixed sites and workplace locations during the entire month of January. We hope you will join us during this month to raise awareness and increase recruitment of blood donors around New Jersey by being a part of one or more of those drives.

For a scheduled drive in your district, please contact NJHA's Mary Ditri, director of professional practice, at (609) 275-4279 or at mditri@njha.com. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth A. Ryan
President & CEO

Joseph F. Vitale
Chair, Senate Health,
Human Services & Senior Citizens

Herb Conaway, MD
Chair, Assembly Health
& Senior Services