

## **PPTA Supports Allowing 18 Year-Olds to Donate Plasma (SB204/HB 255)**

- SB 204/HB 255 would lower the minimum age to donate plasma in Alabama from 19 years-old to 18 years-old.
- There are 14 plasma donation centers in Alabama. They are in Birmingham, Florence, Huntsville, Midfield, Mobile, Phenix City, and Tuscaloosa. These centers are vital parts of the community.
- 48 states allow 18 year-olds to donate plasma. Alabama is one that does not simply because the age of majority in Alabama is 19.
- Donated plasma is the starting material for plasma protein therapies which include:
  - **Clotting Factors**— People with bleeding disorders, such as hemophilia, have a condition in which the ability of the blood to clot is severely reduced. As a result a minor injury may result in internal bleeding, joint and organ damage and even death. Additionally, there is a percentage of people with hemophilia that develop antibodies to clotting factors for which additional plasma therapies may be of benefit.
  - **Immunoglobulin**—There are more than 150 primary immune deficiency disorders (PIDD). These individuals have improperly functioning immune systems and do not respond to traditional antibiotics. Without immunoglobulins, they are exposed to frequent and often serious infections.
  - **Alpha-1 Antitrypsin**—Alpha-1 deficiency is more commonly known as genetic emphysema. It is a heredity condition that may result in serious lung disease in adults and lung and/or liver disease in both children and adults.
  - **Albumin**—Albumin is used to treat burns, trauma patients and surgical patients.
  - **Hyperimmunoglobulins**—These lifesaving therapies are used to treat rabies, tetanus, dialysis patients and organ transplant recipients. They are also used to treat pregnant women who have Rh incompatibility, a condition where the mother and fetus have incompatible blood that can lead to serious injury to the unborn child or even death.
- It is essential that willing healthy donors be able to donate plasma. This becomes clear when you consider it takes 130 donations to produce enough immunoglobulin to treat an adult with primary immune deficiency for a year. For someone with alpha-one antitrypsin deficiency or hemophilia, the estimated number of donations needed for one year of therapy exceeds 900.