



Jesse White

SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS

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Jesse White Unveils New Organ Donor License Plate

CHICAGO — Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White, joined by Connie Payton, the wife of the late Walter Payton, today unveiled the new organ donor awareness license plate, which will be available for Illinois motorists beginning on Jan. 1, 2001.

The new plate is a joint effort between White's office and the Chicago Bears organization in which the sale of the plates will raise funds to promote organ donor awareness programs. The plate will have a blue background with orange letters and white print, which will read "Be An Organ Donor." The far left side of the plate will read "Life Goes On," the organ donation logo, a football with Hall-of-Famer Payton's number 34 and then the words "Walter Payton Chicago Bears."

Chicago City Clerk Jim Laski also announced that inserts included in the city vehicle registration mailing produced 13,000 city residents who signed up as organ donors.

"Walter Payton's incredible display of courage brought much-needed attention to the subject of organ donation and this license plate will serve as an everlasting reminder to everyone that we have an opportunity to provide others with a second chance at life," White said.

"I am very pleased that Walter's legacy is an important part

of the organ donor program and the effort to save lives," Mrs. Payton said.

White commended the Payton Family and the Chicago Bears for their efforts and State Senator Walter Dudycz (R-Chicago), sponsor of the legislation that called for the plate creation. He noted that two of Payton's teammates, Dennis McKinnon and Otis Wilson, traveled to Springfield to successfully gather support for the license plate legislation.

Illinois motorists will be able to obtain the plate for their automobiles by paying the \$78 registration fee and an additional \$25. Of each \$25, a total of \$23 will go to organ donation awareness.

"There is a critical need for organ and tissue donors nationwide, and I am proud of the enormous response to the donor registration inserts by Chicagoans," Laski said.

The decision to include organ donation inserts coincided with the theme of last year's City of Chicago Vehicle Sticker Design Contest which was "Life Goes On, Be An Organ Donor."

A design contest was held for Chicago high school students, and the winning sticker features Payton walking into the sunset.