



Jesse White
SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS

ILLINOIS SECRETARY OF STATE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

- **May 15, 2001**
- CONTACT: Dave Druker
- CONTACT: Randy Nehrt

**Senate Approves White's Initiative To Reduce The
Fraudulent Use of Disability Placards and License Plates**

SPRINGFIELD — Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White's legislative initiative to reduce the fraudulent use of disability placards and license plates was approved unanimously today by the Illinois Senate.

"I'm pleased that this legislation received such strong support in the Senate," said White. "This plan will reduce the fraudulent use of disability parking placards and disability license plates in order to make parking accessible for those who truly need it."

White's legislation, House Bill 846, would:

- Refine the current definition on the application from "Cannot walk 200 feet without stopping to rest" to one of five specific medical conditions
- Allow law enforcement to seize any placard and the Secretary of State to revoke the placard if abuse occurs
- Issue disability license plates to qualified applicants only if their name appears on the vehicle title or to a parent or legal guardian of a person with a disability
- Make it illegal to park in the striped access aisle of a reserved parking space or for two vehicles to share one accessible parking space

In addition to the legislation, White has also proposed administrative changes to the program including:

- Redesigning disability placards:
 - Permanent placards will have a new punch card expiration with a hologram, making them more difficult to tamper with. The placard would also indicate by code the holder's gender, birth month and birth year to help law enforcement officials determine abuse.
 - Temporary placards will also have a new punch card system for expiration with a hologram. They will also be coded by gender.
 - Organization placards, a new category, will also be included on a new punch card hologram system.
- Formatting a new Disabilities License Plate/Placard Unit, which will handle and process all permanent placard and plate requests.
- Initiating a public awareness campaign to educate the general public, medical community and law enforcement agencies about disability parking issues and guidelines.
- Implementing a personnel policy within the Secretary of State's office that can result in disciplinary action including termination for any employee who violates the parking program for persons with disabilities during working hours.

Currently, there are 84,458 disability license plates, 507,851 permanent disability placards and 16,858 temporary disability placards (issued by the Secretary of State) in Illinois. There are 5,000 organizations that have been issued disability placards.

The legislation was sponsored Rep. James D. Brosnahan (D-Evergreen Park) and Sen. Kathleen Parker (R-Northbrook).

The bill returns to the House of Representatives for approval.