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NEWS

ILLINOIS SECRETARY OF STATE

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- **April 4, 2002**
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**Illinois House Approves Additional Powers for
Secretary of State Inspector General**

SPRINGFIELD — Secretary of State Jesse White commended the Illinois House of Representatives today for their unanimous support of legislation to provide his Inspector General with additional resources to investigate public corruption.

"I want to thank members of the Illinois House of Representatives for their support of a measure that ensures the Inspector General has the tools and resources necessary to defend the interests and public safety of Illinois residents," said White. "Their actions should reassure the public that we will not tolerate corruption in state government."

White's legislation (HB 4084) provides the Inspector General with subpoena powers and access to all employees and records necessary to an investigation. The measure establishes potential penalties for any employee who fails to cooperate with an investigation. It also protects honest employees from any reprisal for disclosing information to the Inspector General.

In addition, the legislation mandates the position of Inspector General must be filled by a qualified individual upon Senate confirmation. It gives inspectors police powers and calls for the Inspector General to adopt rules and regulations establishing minimum requirements for initiating, conducting and completing investigations. White is optimistic the measure, which received approval from the House and Senate in slightly different forms last year, will receive full approval from the General Assembly this year.

White's Inspector General Jim Burns has already taken action to upgrade the office by hiring additional investigators throughout the state who have experience and expertise in the types of investigations that are conducted by the office. Burns requires investigators to visit Secretary of State facilities regularly and he has posted signs in all the facilities around the state displaying a hotline to report misconduct.

The measure was sponsored in the House by State Rep. Steve Davis (D-Wood River). It now awaits consideration from the Illinois Senate. State Senator Vince Demuzio (D-Carlinville) is sponsoring the bill.