



**Jesse White**  
SECRETARY OF STATE

**NEWS**

ILLINOIS SECRETARY OF STATE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**August 20, 2003**

CONTACT: Randy Nehrt

**White Applauds Governor for Signing Legislation Creating  
Permanent Inspector General with Broader Powers**

**SPRINGFIELD** — Secretary of State Jesse White today thanked Governor Rod Blagojevich for signing into law legislation making the position of Inspector General permanent with broader powers to root out corruption.

"This helps send a strong message that public corruption will not be tolerated in Illinois," White said. "I commend the governor for signing this legislation that makes this office permanent and expand its powers, giving the Inspector additional resources to initiate and conduct investigations of public corruption." White said SB 706 extends his five-year effort to restore public trust in the office. "I have established a code of conduct for employees. I have appointed Jim Burns, a former US Attorney, to serve as my Inspector General. Now this legislation will ensure that the Secretary of State's office will have a permanent, qualified Inspector General in place to protect public safety."

The new law makes the Inspector General (IG) a permanent position within the Secretary of State's office, establishes qualification criteria for those appointed and requires Senate confirmation. It also mandates that the Inspector General must report directly to the Secretary of State. The authority also provides the IG with subpoena powers and protects whistleblowers from retribution. In addition, the legislation calls for the Inspector General to adopt rules and regulations establishing minimum requirements for initiating, conducting and completing investigations.

"I want to thank Secretary of State Jesse White and the governor for giving my office the tools to combat corruption," said Jim Burns, White's Inspector General. "This new authority gives us the resources to initiate and conduct investigations as well as the ability to take proactive steps that will help prevent the type of corruption that plagued this office in the past."

White has already taken action to upgrade the IG office by hiring additional investigators throughout the state. He requires investigators to visit Secretary of State facilities regularly and he has posted signs displaying a hotline to report misconduct in driver services facilities throughout Illinois.

"When I was first elected Secretary of State, I made a promise to the people of Illinois that I would take every step possible to eliminate the corruption in the office," White said. "I have been vigilant in my effort to guard against public corruption and to put in place the necessary people and procedures to protect the public." White also thanked the bills original sponsors Rep. Steve Davis (D-Bethalto) and State Sen. Vince Demuzio (D-Carlinville)