



Jesse White
SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS

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**White Applauds Legislature for Permanent Inspector General
with Broader Powers**

SPRINGFIELD — Secretary of State Jesse White today thanked the Illinois General Assembly for approving legislation to make the position of Inspector General permanent with broader powers to root out corruption. White has asked Governor Blagojevich to help send a strong message that public corruption will not be tolerated in Illinois by signing the bill into law.

"I commend the members of the Illinois Senate and House of Representatives for supporting our request to make this office permanent and expand its powers," White said. "This legislation provides our Inspector General with 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 bill 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 new authority 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.

"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 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.

"I want to thank Secretary of State Jesse White and the Illinois General Assembly 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."