



# Jesse White

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## SECRETARY OF STATE

# NEWS

**For Immediate Release:**

April 20, 2005

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### **Senate Committee Approves First-Person Consent Organ & Tissue Donor Bill**

Springfield—Secretary of State Jesse White applauded the Illinois Senate Health & Human Services Committee for approving legislation today to create a First-Person Consent Organ and Tissue Donor Registry in Illinois.

The measure (HB1077) would make a person's decision to donate organs and tissue following their death binding under state law. While Illinois has the largest donor registry in the country with more than six million participants, organs and tissue may not be donated unless the registrant's next of kin gives consent. Similar legislation has been approved in 42 other states.

"I want to thank the members of the committee for approving a measure that will save more lives," White said. "Even though Illinois has the largest donor registry of any state in the nation, 5,000 people are currently waiting for organ transplants.

"Sometimes family members have a difficult time making the decision to donate a loved one's organs when they are overcome by grief and are already faced with many difficult decisions. This measure would make a person's decision to donate organs and tissue binding under state law. It will honor the donor's decision and remove a difficult choice from a grieving family."

According to Gift of Hope, an organ and tissue procurement organization covering much of Illinois, 40 percent of families say no to organ donation when approached for permission. Families also say no 19 percent of the time even when notified their loved one had joined the state's donor registry. Gift of Hope estimates that a first-person consent law could save at least 100 additional lives each year. One donor can save or enhance the lives of more than 25 people.

Although Illinois has the largest donor registry in the country with more than six million people, approximately 300 people in the state die each year waiting for a transplant. Nationally, there are 87,000 people waiting for transplant operations. Every 13 minutes a new person is added to the national waiting list and 17 people across the country die each day waiting for a transplant.

House Bill 1077 is sponsored by State Senator Jacqueline Collins (D-16). The legislation now moves to the full Senate for consideration.

To become an organ or tissue donor:

- Sign the back of your Illinois driver's license or ID card right on the plastic and have it witnessed by two people.
- Discuss the issue with your family because donation cannot occur without next-of-kin consent.
- Join the state registry. If you agree to be a donor when you visit a driver's facility you will automatically be listed in our Organ Donor Registry. You can also join by