



# Jesse White

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## SECRETARY OF STATE

# NEWS

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### **Jesse White's Legislation To Improve Teen Driver Laws Moves to Governor's Desk** *Illinois House Overwhelmingly Approves Measure*

Legislation proposed by Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White to improve teen driving laws with the aim of reducing traffic crashes and fatalities involving young drivers was approved today by the Illinois House of Representatives. The bill now moves to the governor's office for his approval.

Senate Bill 172, sponsored in the House by State Representative John D'Amico (D-Chicago), will improve the Illinois Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) Program that governs drivers up to the age of 21. Several recent studies have shown that comprehensive GDL programs greatly reduce traffic crashes and fatalities involving teen drivers. The legislation is based on recommendations made by White's Teen Driver Safety Task Force, composed of legislators, traffic safety experts, law enforcement officials, educators, judges and victim advocates.

"Traffic crashes are the leading cause of death among adolescents," White said. "Last summer, I formed a task force to address this very serious problem and our mission was clear: to develop legislation that will strengthen the Illinois GDL law and reduce fatal crashes involving teen drivers. This proposal has already gained widespread acclaim from leading national traffic safety experts who believe our legislation will make Illinois' GDL program one of the best in the nation."

Senate Bill 172 includes the following nine provisions:

- \* Triples the permit phase from 3 to 9 months.
- \* Changes the nighttime driving restriction from 11 p.m. to 10 p.m. on weekdays and from midnight to 11 p.m. on weekends. Also extends the nighttime restriction to include 17 year-olds. Allows exemptions for work and school-sanctioned activities.
- \* Doubles the period – from 6 to 12 months – that restricts a new driver to a maximum of one unrelated teen passenger. Allows an exemption for siblings.
- \* Requires student drivers to complete a minimum of 6 hours of actual, on-the-street driving with a certified driver education instructor.
- \* Implements a true GDL system that requires new drivers to earn their way from one stage to the next.
- \* Requires drivers under age 18 who are ticketed for traffic violations to appear before a judge with a parent or guardian to receive court supervision. Requires the attendance of traffic school as a requisite for court supervision for drivers under age 21.
- \* Allows for ticketing passengers age 15 to 20 that violate the passenger restriction law.
- \* Establishes a stricter law in which the driver's licenses of those under age 21 would be suspended for each additional conviction following a driver's initial suspension for two moving violations in a 24-month period.
- \* Establishes tough, new penalties that include license revocation and vehicle impoundment for drivers involved in street racing.

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