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**Jesse White Co-Hosted Candlelight Vigil with AAIM & MADD
for Victims of Drunk Driving Crashes**
Reminds Drivers to Travel Safe This Holiday Season

Secretary of State Jesse White joined Alliance Against Intoxicated Motorists (AAIM) and Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) to honor those killed and injured by drunk drivers at a candlelight vigil on Tuesday, December 18, 2012, 4 p.m., inside the lower level auditorium of the James R. Thompson Center.

Secretary White spoke about the consequences of drunk driving, along with Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan, Cook County State's Attorney Anita Alvarez and other dignitaries. The program also included a ceremonial lighting of candles, personal testimonies from two survivors affected by drunk driving and musical tributes from local vocalists.

In light of the memorial, Secretary White reminded motorists how important it is to celebrate the holiday season safely and avoid drinking and driving.

"As celebrations continue and family and friends return home, we want to take every precaution we can to prevent tragedy in our family or someone else's due to drunk driving," White said. "If you can't travel sober, designate a sober driver, take public transportation or catch a cab. There is no excuse for drinking and driving."

- During the 2011 Christmas weekend, there were 13 crash fatalities statewide, five of which were alcohol-related, according to the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). There were 322 alcohol-related traffic injuries, which is approximately 20% of the 1,642 total motor vehicle crashes, IDOT reported.
- During the 2011 New Year's weekend in Illinois, there were nine crash fatalities, three of which were alcohol-related, according to IDOT. There were 340 alcohol-related traffic injuries, which is approximately 17% of the 1,957 total motor vehicle crashes, IDOT reported.
- Nationally in 2010, an estimated 10,228 people died in alcohol-related traffic crashes, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. These deaths constitute 31 percent of the 32,885 total traffic fatalities, NHTSA reported.

The Secretary of State's office will join IDOT, Illinois State Police and law enforcement agencies to conduct DUI and seatbelt patrols during the holiday season, White said.

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