

For Immediate Release:
July 25, 2012

For More Information Contact:
David Druker
Rachel Farrer

Jesse White's Legislation on Distracted Driving Signed into Law

Bans Hand-Held Cell Phone Use by Truck Drivers; Upgrades Offense for Texting While Driving a Commercial Truck

Legislation proposed by Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White to further strengthen the laws on distracted driving was recently signed into law by Governor Pat Quinn. Effective January 1, 2013, this law will ban the use of hand-held cell phones by Commercial Drivers License (CDL) holders operating commercial motor vehicles and upgrades the offense to a serious violation for truck drivers ticketed for texting while driving.

"House Bill 5101 represents another important step in our efforts to combat distracted driving," said White. "With the increased use of technological devices, distracted driving continues to be a serious problem in our state and in the nation. No driver has any business text messaging while they are driving, especially someone operating a commercial motor vehicle. My goal as Secretary of State is to make the roads as safe as possible."

House Bill 5101 was sponsored in the House by State Representative John D'Amico (D-Chicago) and in the Senate by Senator Martin Sandoval (D-Cicero). The bill was signed into law on July 20th. This law establishes both offenses as serious traffic violations; penalties for two serious violations received within a three year period may result in loss of CDL privileges for a two month period of time as set by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

White has targeted distracted driving as a key element in his effort to improve road safety. In 2008, White served as chairman of the state's Distracted Driving Task Force. He initiated a pair of key laws that took effect January 1, 2010 which banned texting while driving for all drivers and that banned hand-held cell phone usage for motorists driving in school and construction zones.

###