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**Jesse White Encourages People to Wear Helmets and Bike Responsibly
During Bike Safety Month**

Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White is encouraging children and adults at a far north side school to practice safe bike riding and to always wear a helmet as May marks Bike Safety Month.

“Teaching kids to bike safely now will help them become responsible adult bike riders and drivers,” White said. “It is important to wear helmets, obey traffic signs and signals, supervise children as they ride and take the bike paths where available. My office would like to ensure a safe and enjoyable ride for everyone on the road.”

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA):

- Head injuries are the most serious type of injury and the most common cause of death for bicyclists. Bicycle helmets have been proven to reduce the risk of head and brain injury by as much as 88 percent.
- In 2011, 16% of the bicyclists injured in motor vehicle crashes were 14 years old and younger.
- 72% of all bicyclist deaths in 2010 occurred in urban areas with most occurring between 4 p.m. and 8 p.m.

White spoke about bike safety during a press conference and bike rodeo at St. Margaret Mary School on Chicago’s far north side. Representatives from the Chicago’s Safe Routes and Bicycling Ambassadors, Safe Kids Illinois and the Chicago Police Department spoke about the importance of safety and sharing the road.

“As the weather continues to get warmer, more bicyclists will be sharing the roads with cars,” said White. “In order to make our roads safe for everyone, as bike riders we should follow the same rules of the road as motorists and as drivers we should keep our eyes out for bicyclists.”

“In order for bicyclists and motorists to safely share the road, it is the responsibility of both drivers to obey all traffic laws,” said Officer Jean Maroney.

“Learning to share the road begins at a young age,” said Charlie Short of the Bicycling Ambassadors. “It’s important for children to learn how to ride safely on sidewalks and trails.”

White reminds Illinoisans that his office issues the Bicycle Rules of the Road to ensure safe bike travel. Visit any of the Secretary of State’s facilities for a copy of the Bicycle Rules of the Road, or visit the website at www.cyberdriveillinois.com.

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