



# Jesse White

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## SECRETARY OF STATE

# NEWS

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### **White Asks Governor To Sign Legislative Initiatives To Increase Organ/Tissue Donations, Limit Court Supervision And Raise Penalties For Disability Parking Violations**

Secretary of State Jesse White urged Governor Blagojevich to sign three important bills he initiated this year. White said the measures would lead directly to more lives being saved each year through an increase in donated organs; safer roads through the limitation of court supervision; and greater accessibility for disabled persons through increased fines and penalties for those who violate parking laws. All three measures received strong support from the Illinois General Assembly.

“I want to thank the General Assembly for their assistance in addressing important public health and public safety issues,” White said. “I urge Governor Blagojevich to sign these measures so more organs and tissue will be available to those waiting for transplants, to allow my office to remove more dangerous drivers from our roads and to increase the penalties against those who wrongly park in spots reserved for the disabled.”

House Bill 1077 creates a First-Person Consent Organ/Tissue Donor Law in Illinois. This law would make a person’s decision to donate organs and tissue following death binding under state law. Currently an individual’s organs and tissue may not be donated without the consent of the person’s next of kin, even if he or she has joined the state’s donor registry.

According to Gift of Hope, an organ and tissue procurement organization covering much of Illinois, 40 percent of families say no to organ and tissue donation when approached for permission. Families also say no to donating organs and tissue 19 percent of the time even when they are told that 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. Similar legislation has been approved in 42 other states.

While 5,000 people are waiting for transplants in Illinois, one donor can save or enhance the lives of more than 25 people. Although Illinois has the largest donor registry in the country, approximately 300 people in the state die each year waiting for a transplant.

“Although six million people in Illinois have joined our organ and tissue donor registry, their wishes are sometimes not carried through,” White said. “This measure would make a person’s decision to donate organs and tissue binding under state law. It will also make more life-saving organs available for transplant each year.”

House Bill 1483 would limit drivers to two court supervisions for moving violations in a 12-month period. Any other moving violations a driver is found guilty of during that time frame would result in convictions reported to the individual's permanent driving record.

White said the legislation was necessary because a small percentage of Illinois drivers have received too many dispositions of court supervision in recent years. Some drivers have been granted court supervision more than a dozen times in a single year, keeping the offenses off their permanent records so their driving privileges can't be suspended for committing too many moving violations.

"This legislation is intended to make a driver's permanent record a more accurate reflection of driving habits," White said. "While just one percent of all licensed drivers have been granted multiple court supervisions in each of the past four years, a few thousand drivers have been granted court supervision more than three times in each twelve month period."

Last year, 3,785 drivers received court supervision for more than three offenses, 128 drivers received court supervision more than six times and one driver received court supervision 14 times. Over the past three years, 28 drivers have received court supervision 10 or more times in a twelve-month period.

House Bill 1316 would increase fines against those caught improperly parking in a disability parking space to \$500 as well as allow the Secretary of State to suspend their drivers' licenses. It also increases penalties against those who illegally alter or fraudulently manufacture disability placards or plates.

"Stiffer fines and the potential suspension of driving privileges should make more drivers think twice before parking in spaces reserved for people with disabilities," White said. "It is unconscionable that able-bodied people would abuse this important program."

White also requested the Governor to sign into law the following legislative initiatives from his office: HB 956, HB1565, SB301, SB 302, SB 468, SB 504, SB 533, SB 1825.

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