



Jesse White

SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS

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Secretary Of State Jesse White Welcomes Students to 6th Annual Capitol Forum On America's Future

Springfield—Secretary of State Jesse White and the Illinois Humanities Council welcome more than 170 Illinois high school students to the State Capitol on Friday, March 11 to participate in Illinois' Capitol Forum on America's Future.

The Capitol Forum is a civic education program that challenges young people to debate controversial issues that impact their country's future.

"Illinois is one of only nine states in the nation chosen to participate in this project. I think this speaks to our state's commitment to education," said White. "As the future leaders of this country, I applaud these students for addressing and debating the challenges we face as a nation."

A panel discussion during the afternoon portion of the program will include Dr. Ronald Rotunda, Special Counsel to the U.S. Secretary of Defense, State Representative Rich Brauer (R-Springfield), State Representative Larry McKeon (D-Chicago), Dr. Steve Schwark from the University of Illinois at Springfield, Michael Jarecki an immigration attorney from Chicago and Marie Tipsord an environmental attorney from Chicago.

The program has been highlighted nationally with articles appearing in the New York Times and coverage by CNN for its efforts to bring debate to the classroom and educate students about current United States foreign policy issues.

The Capitol Forum curriculum is coordinated nationally by the Choices for the 21st Century Education Project, a program of the Watson Institute for International Studies at Brown University and it is partially funded through a grant given by the McCormick Tribune Foundation.

"This is a great opportunity for students to get together and talk with their peers about our government and about United States foreign policy. These can be difficult issues to discuss but the Capitol Forum gets students involved in the process," said Kristina Valaitis, Executive Director of the Illinois Humanities Council, co-sponsor of the Illinois Capitol Forum Program. "We need more opportunities like this for our high schools."

A list of participating schools is attached.

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