



Jesse White

SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS

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Jesse White Unveils Ad Campaign To Kick Off Donate Life! Month Encourages Illinoisans to Join New Donor Registry Through Statewide Drives

Secretary of State Jesse White encouraged Illinoisans to join the state's new organ and tissue donor registry following the unveiling of an ad campaign aimed at saving more lives.

April is National Donate Life! Month. Organizations will be working together to promote organ and tissue donor awareness throughout the state, which is especially important this year following a law that took effect January 1st creating a new organ and tissue donor registry.

The new registry ensures a person's decision to donate organs and tissue following their death will be carried out. Previously, the decision was not legally binding and remained with the person's family. Because of that, nearly 20 percent of consenting donors had their decision overturned, according to Gift of Hope.

Donors who registered before Jan. 1, 2006, need to re-register with the Secretary of State's office to ensure their wishes are honored.

In urging citizens to join the new registry, White noted the process only takes a minute. Illinoisans can register to become organ donors by clicking on www.LifeGoesOn.com, by visiting any Illinois state driver's license facility, or by calling the Illinois Secretary of State Organ/Tissue Donor Program at 1-800-210-2106.

"Donor registration is an excellent way to dedicate yourself and make a difference by helping save the lives of others," said White. "This year we are focused on raising awareness for Illinois' new donor registry. We want everyone to join this new registry because it ensures the donor's wishes will be honored. The new registry will lead to increased transplants and save more lives."

White will attend press conferences and donor drives throughout the state in an effort to encourage people to sign up for the new registry. Those drives will be happening in cities across the state including Springfield, Rockford, Carbondale, Quincy, Moline, Bloomington, Champaign, Hillsboro, Ina, Peoria and Edwardsville as well as visits within the Chicago area through out the month.

Television and radio ads, featuring seven Illinoisans waiting for transplants, will air in cities and towns across the state. This year's television commercial includes the song, *Waiting in Vain* by Bob Marley. The commercials were produced by Adelstein/Liston.

"We're asking Illinoisans to take the simple yet critical step to help save the lives of thousands of people whose survival depends on an organ donation," said Jarold Anderson, President and CEO, Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network. "Join the new registry. Make sure your desire to give the gift of life is fulfilled."

"Mid-America Transplant Services (MTS) is privileged to work with the Illinois Secretary of State's Organ Donor Program to help increase awareness across the state of Illinois," said Brian Bush of MTS.