



Jesse White

SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS

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Jesse White Unveils New Organ and Tissue Donation Campaign Focusing on the Daughter of Chicago Bears Cornerback Charles Tillman

White Kicks Off Donate Life! Month at Children's Memorial Hospital Where 17-Month-Old Twins Await Transplant

Secretary of State Jesse White urged all Illinoisans to join the state's organ and tissue donor registry, following the unveiling of an ad campaign featuring the daughter of Chicago Bears cornerback Charles Tillman.

"This campaign shows that everyone, even a professional football player's family, can be touched by the need for organ and tissue donation," White said. "Thanks to the giving spirit of an organ donor, this precious, little baby is growing up as a happy, healthy little girl."

April is National Donate Life! Month. Organizations will be working together to promote organ and tissue donor awareness throughout the state. Television and radio ads will air throughout the month of April statewide in English and Spanish encouraging people to become an organ/tissue donor. The ad will also be played on approximately 650 movie screens across the state.

In the ad, Tillman said, "As a professional athlete I face a lot of challenges, but my biggest challenge didn't happen on the field, it happened when I learned my daughter needed a heart transplant."

Nationally, more than 100,000 people are currently waiting for organ and tissue donations. In Illinois, more than 5.1 million people have signed up for the registry. White is encouraging those who haven't registered since 2006 to register with the First Person Consent Organ/Tissue Registry, which makes a person's decision to donate legally binding.

Illinoisans can register by visiting www.LifeGoesOn.com, or calling the Illinois Secretary of State Organ/Tissue Donor Program at 1-800-210-2106, or while obtaining or renewing an Illinois driver's license or state identification card at any state driver's license facility.

White will attend events throughout Illinois to encourage donation. Libraries are distributing organ and tissue donation materials and hosting donor drives. A number of cities, parks, churches, sports arenas, police departments and hospitals are participating in events statewide that honor donors and recipients.

"Public awareness is crucial with organ and tissue donation," said Jarold Anderson, President/CEO of Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network. "We commend campaigns such as this one launched by Secretary White. These efforts have made and continue to make a tremendous impact in our efforts here in Illinois to save and improve the lives of as many people as possible."

"Mid-America Transplant Services (MTS) is privileged to work with the Illinois Secretary of State's Organ/Tissue Donor Program to help increase awareness across the state of Illinois," said Tammy McLane, director of corporate communications for the downstate procurement agency.