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**Jesse White Announces Two Key Traffic Safety Laws to Take Effect January 1**

Two important pieces of legislation supported this year by Secretary of State Jesse White will take effect as new laws January 1<sup>st</sup> and include measures that improve school bus safety as well as increase safety belt usage.

Public Act 97-0466 allows a school bus company that has a reasonable suspicion to believe that their school bus driver is under the influence of alcohol or drugs to require the driver to submit to alcohol and drug testing before driving a school bus. The Secretary of State's office will then suspend for three years the school bus permit of a driver who refuses to submit to a test or fails to obtain a zero tolerance for the presence of alcohol, drugs or intoxicating compounds.

"It is unconscionable that anyone would ever endanger the lives of school children by consuming alcohol or drugs prior to driving their school bus route," said White. "This law ensures that any such school bus driver's permit will be suspended by my office for three years."

Public Act 97-0016 requires safety belt use for all backseat passengers. Prior to this change, only front seat passengers were required to wear a safety belt under the state's primary safety belt law.

"Safety belts have proven to be effective at reducing the severity of injuries and saving lives in automobile crashes," said White. "These two new laws will make the roads safer for all of us. I want to thank Governor Pat Quinn and the General Assembly for their assistance in addressing these important traffic safety issues."

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