



# Jesse White

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## SECRETARY OF STATE

# NEWS

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### **Jesse White's School Bus Driver Legislation Moves to Governor's Desk for Signature**

Legislation proposed by Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White to 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 has unanimously passed both chambers of the General Assembly. The bill, which has an effective date of January 1, 2012, now moves to the governor's office for his approval.

"As a former public school teacher and school administrator and founder of the Jesse White Tumbling Team, I have dedicated my life to helping children," said White. "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. This legislation ensures that any such school bus driver's permit will be suspended by my office for three years."

House Bill 147, sponsored in the House by Lisa Dugan (D-Kankakee) and in the Senate by Toi Hutchinson (D-Chicago Heights) 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 suspend the school bus permit for three years of any driver that refuses to submit to the test or fails to obtain a zero tolerance for alcohol or drugs.

Under Illinois law, in order to obtain a school bus driver permit all school bus drivers must submit to fingerprinting and extensive state and federal background checks to further ensure the safety of Illinois school children. The fingerprints are continuously checked against the state and federal databases to assure that a future conviction for any offense that would exclude a driver from operating a school bus will result in the immediate suspension of the driver's school bus permit.

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