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**Secretary of State Jesse White Announces Key Traffic Safety Laws to Take Effect January 1**  
*Also highlights changes to Disability Parking Placard program*

Two important pieces of legislation initiated this year by Secretary of State Jesse White will take effect as new laws on January 1 and include measures that strengthen the state's heralded Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) program as well as further restrict the issuance of court supervision. Other new laws effective January 1 make significant changes to the Parking Program for Persons with Disabilities.

Kelsey's Law

Public Act 98-0168, sponsored by state Rep. John D'Amico (D-Chicago) and state Sen. Martin Sandavol (D-Cicero), prohibits the issuance of a driver's license to a driver under 18 who has an unresolved traffic citation. The new law also allows White's office to cancel a GDL if it is determined that at the time of issuance the minor had a traffic citation for which a disposition had not been rendered. Under current law, a GDL applicant is not required to report any pending traffic citations.

The measure is named Kelsey's Law in honor of Kelsey Little who in 2011 was seriously injured in an automobile crash by a young driver operating on a learner's permit. The driver was issued a traffic citation for the incident, of which the Secretary of State's office was unaware due to the lack of a reporting requirement. Three days later the teen driver applied for and was issued a driver's license.

"One of my top priorities as Secretary of State has been to continually strengthen our GDL program," said White. "Since we implemented one of the nation's most comprehensive GDL laws in the nation in 2008, teen driving fatalities have dropped by 60 percent. But even the best programs can be made better, and this legislation will help strengthen our state's GDL program, and hopefully save even more lives."

Patricia's Law

Public Act 98-0169, sponsored by state Rep. John D'Amico (D-Chicago) and state Sen. Michael Hastings (D-Matteson), will ensure that drivers involved in fatal crashes are ineligible for court supervision unless they have maintained a clean driving history. The legislation, named Patricia's Law in honor of Patricia McNamara who was killed in an automobile crash in which the driver received court supervision, originated from White's Advisory Committee on Traffic Safety, which unanimously supported the measure at a meeting last September.

"My mission as Secretary of State is to make the roads of Illinois as safe as possible," said White. "Since I took office in 1999, I have continually worked to improve traffic safety laws, particularly those laws involving court supervision. This is an important next step, and one that makes sense."

Over the last decade, White's office has initiated legislation to limit the issuance of court supervision, as well as establishing a central database to help judges and court personnel better track the dispositions of court supervision from county to county across the state.

#### Parking Program for Persons with Disabilities

Due to legislation passed by the General Assembly, beginning January 1, 2014, only persons with specific types of disabilities with a valid Illinois driver's license will be exempt from paying parking meter fees.

Public Act 97-0845, sponsored by former state Rep. Karen May and state Sen. Maggie Crotty (D-Oak Forest), requires the disability license plate or parking placard holder to meet more stringent eligibility requirements that must be approved by physicians in order to receive a yellow and grey permanent placard. The new placard will exempt the authorized holder from the payment of parking meter fees because their disability restricts them from physically feeding the meter.

Those who do not meet eligibility requirements for the meter-exempt placard will still receive a permanent placard but will be required to pay meter fees.

Out-of-state disability license plate and placard holders will also have access to disability parking spaces but will no longer be eligible for meter-exempt parking.

Also beginning January 1, the fine for drivers caught misusing a disability placard will increase from \$500 to \$600. Additionally, if a physician, physician assistant or advanced practice nurse knowingly falsifies a disability application, they will face increased fines from \$500 to \$1,000 for a first offense and up to \$2,000 for a second offense.

If the holder of the disability placard or license plates knowingly allows someone else to use their placard or license plates, that person will face a \$1,000 fine for the first offense and a \$2,000 fine for the second offense.

"All these changes in the law aim to help discourage the misuse and abuse of the Parking Program for Persons with Disabilities," White said. "Our goal is to ensure that disability parking spaces are available for those who truly need that access to conduct their day-to-day activities. My message is simple: if you don't belong there, don't park there."

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