

For Immediate Release:
May 9, 2013

For More Information Contact:
Henry Haupt

Jesse White's Legislation Strengthening GDL Law Approved by Senate
Prohibits the issuance of a license to anyone under 18 that has an unresolved traffic citation

Legislation proposed by Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White to prohibit the issuance of a driver's license to a driver under 18 that has an unresolved traffic citation was approved by Illinois State Senate. The legislation – named Kelsey's Law in honor of Kelsey Little – now moves to the governor's office for his approval.

“One of my top priorities as Secretary of State has been to continually strengthen our state's heralded Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) program,” said White. “Since we implemented one of the nation's most comprehensive GDL programs in the nation in 2008, teen driving fatalities have dropped by nearly 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 lives.”

House Bill 1009, sponsored by Sen. Martin Sandavol (D-Cicero) in the State Senate and state Rep. John D'Amico (D-Chicago) in the House of Representatives, will prohibit the issuance of a driver's license to anyone under 18 that has a traffic citation for which a disposition has not been rendered. The bill also allows White's office to cancel a GDL if it is determined that at the time of issuance the minor had an unresolved traffic citation. Under current law, a GDL applicant is not required to report any pending traffic citations.

The legislation is named in honor of 15-year-old 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.

“This legislation will make our roads safer and establishes additional accountability and subsequent penalties for potentially unsafe and irresponsible young, novice drivers,” said White.

###