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Jesse White Unveils New Organ/Tissue Donation Campaign; Featuring Daughter who Donated Cornea to her Mother

Secretary of State Jesse White unveiled a new ad campaign today featuring a dying daughter who gave her mother the gift of sight through organ/tissue donation.

“Many times people think that if they are suffering from a terminal disease they will be unable to donate,” White said. “In this commercial, we see that even someone with cancer can give the gift of life. The message is meaningful because now a mother has the ability to literally see through her daughter’s eyes.”

The commercial shows how Rosemarie Beedy lost her daughter Krissy to cancer. But in Krissy’s final hours, she chose to donate her cornea to her mother. Rosemarie is now able to see her granddaughter and great-granddaughter through her daughter’s eyes.

April is National Donate Life Month. White will attend events throughout Illinois to encourage donation. Organizations will be working together to promote donor awareness throughout the state.

Television and radio ads will air in English and Spanish statewide throughout the month. The spot will also be played on more than 400 movie screens across the state.

Currently, there are more than 5.7 million people registered to become organ/tissue donors in Illinois. However, more than 5,000 are on the waiting list and about 300 people die each year waiting for an organ transplant.

“We encourage Illinoisans to join the Secretary of State’s Organ and Tissue Donor Registry,” said White. “It takes less than a minute and one person can improve the quality of life for up to 25 people.”

Illinoisans can register with the Secretary of State Organ/Tissue Donor Program at LifeGoesOn.com, 1-800-210-2106 or by visiting their local Driver Services facility.

During this month, libraries are distributing organ/tissue donor materials and hosting donor drives. Health fairs, schools, colleges and hospitals will also be hosting donor drives and featuring displays statewide.

Donate Life Illinois partners include the American Liver Foundation-Illinois, Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network; Saving Sight; Illinois Eye-Bank; Illinois Secretary of State Organ/Tissue Donor Program; LifeSource; Mid-America Transplant Services; Rock River Valley Blood Center; and National Kidney Foundation of Illinois.

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