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Jesse White Announces Teen Driving Deaths Down 51% since GDL Overhaul in 2008
Encourages communication between parents and teens during National Teen Driver Safety Week

Kicking off National Teen Driver Safety Week, Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White announced teen driving deaths have decreased by more than half. According to the Illinois Department of Transportation, there were 155 teen driving deaths (age 16-19) in 2007. Since White's efforts to overhaul the state's graduated driver licensing (GDL) laws took effect in 2008, teen driving fatalities have dropped by 51 percent – with 76 teen driving deaths in 2016. Many cite White's nationally heralded GDL program for the decrease.

“When I first assembled the Teen Driver Safety Task Force, we knew we faced a difficult task,” said White. “I am pleased this law is working as we intended. The goal has always been to save lives. We worked hard to strengthen our GDL program and make it one of the best in the nation.”

Illinois' GDL program better prepares novice, teen drivers by giving them more time to obtain valuable driving experience while under the watchful eye of a parent or guardian, limiting in-car distractions and requiring teens to earn their way from one stage to the next by avoiding traffic convictions.

White emphasized the important roles that parents, high school teachers and driver education instructors play in preparing safe and responsible teen drivers. State and national traffic safety organizations have praised Illinois' stronger GDL program as one of the best in the nation. To learn more about the state's GDL program, visit www.cyberdriveillinois.com.

White is also reminding the public that National Teen Driver Safety Week is October 15-21, a time when parents and caregivers are encouraged to talk to teens about staying safe behind the wheel. It is important to discuss how to avoid risky driving behaviors such as texting while driving, drinking alcohol, speeding and not wearing a seat belt.

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