

For Immediate Release:
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Jesse White Unveils New Organ/Tissue Donation Campaign
Highlights five-organ transplant recipient Phillip Hanks story

Secretary of State Jesse White unveiled a new ad campaign featuring Phillip Hanks, an organ recipient who received five lifesaving organs from a single donor. The campaign marks the beginning of National Donate Life Month in April.

“Phillip’s story shows how organ and tissue donation saves lives,” said Secretary White. “Phillip was able to be there for the birth of his granddaughter and he now works as an advocate for my office with the organ/tissue donor program. He reminds us that by registering to become an organ donor that you, too, could help change someone’s story.”

Phillip needed the transplant because after a liver transplant in 2007, an extra valve in the liver produced scar tissue blocking an important vein, which required the five-organ transplant known as a multivisceral transplant. In April 2021, Phillip received a new liver, small and large intestine, stomach, pancreas and kidney.

In the public service announcement (PSA), Phillip says, “My story goes on because a person I never met made a choice that saved my life.”

To view the spot in English, visit <https://youtu.be/DGFdEdExn08>. To view the Spanish link, visit <https://youtu.be/31zxZJp9wHA>. For radio in English and Spanish, visit https://www.lifegoeson.com/virtual/donate_life_month/media/radio-english22.mp3 and https://www.lifegoeson.com/virtual/donate_life_month/media/radio-spanish22.mp3.

Approximately 4,000 people are on the waiting list in Illinois. About 300 die each year waiting for an organ transplant.

The PSA encourages people to enroll in the Secretary of State’s Organ/Tissue Donor Registry. The television, radio, digital display and social media ads will run in English and Spanish statewide throughout the month. The ads will also be shown in movie theaters.

“The Organ/Tissue Donor Program has been a priority in my administration as well as a personal mission,” said White. “My family experienced the miracle of donation when my sister received a kidney from a generous donor before I was Secretary of State. When I became Secretary of State in 1999, there were approximately 4 million people registered with the Secretary of State’s Organ and Tissue Donor Registry -- now we have more than 7.3 million registered Illinoisans.”

During this month, Secretary White will participate in organ/tissue donor initiatives including organ donor flag raising ceremonies statewide. In addition, organ/tissue donor staff will host informational tables, distribute organ donor materials, and host training sessions.

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

Donate Life Illinois partners include Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network, Eversight, Mid-America Transplant Services and the National Kidney Foundation of Illinois. The Illinois Department of Public Health participated in the event and is collaborating with the Secretary of State’s Organ/Tissue Donor program.