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Jesse White Unveils New Organ/Tissue Donation Campaign
Highlights White Sox Legend Ed Farmer's transplant story

Secretary of State Jesse White unveiled a new ad campaign today featuring White Sox All-Star relief pitcher and longtime radio voice of the team, Ed "Farmio" Farmer, who died last year. The campaign marks the beginning of National Donate Life Month in April.

"We lost an extraordinary person with the passing of Ed Farmer," said Secretary White. "I was proud to partner with Ed on organ/tissue donation awareness campaigns in the past and saw first-hand his passion and commitment to this lifesaving program. I am proud to feature Ed in this campaign -- a man who dedicated himself to giving back to this lifesaving program. Ed was a true hero."

In the public service announcement (PSA), Ed says, "I always say, heaven knows you can't take them (organs) with you." To view the spot in English, visit <https://youtu.be/PXFBdT4bbMk>, to view the Spanish link, visit <https://youtu.be/oTqA7-FVG-E>.

For more than a decade, Ed, joined by White Sox players, participated in events at the James R. Thompson Center and Guarantee Rate Field to encourage organ and tissue donation with the Secretary of State's Organ/Tissue Donor Registry. As an advocate for donation, Ed served on the board of directors for the Polycystic Kidney Disease Research Foundation and testified in 1995 before the U.S. House of Representatives on the issue. In 2014, Ed was honored with a Champions Award from Donate Life America for his outstanding advocacy of organ donation.

Currently, there are 7.1 million people registered to become organ/tissue donors in Illinois and approximately 4,000 people are on the waiting list. 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.

During this month, Secretary White will participate in organ/tissue donor initiatives that celebrate reaching the milestone of having more than 7 million registrants in Illinois. In addition, organ/tissue donor staff will host informational tables, distribute organ donor materials, and host training sessions.

"We encourage all Illinoisans to join the organ and tissue donor registry," said White. "One person can improve the quality of life for up to 25 people."

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.

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