

Gov. Rauner signs bill allowing 16- and 17-year-olds to join organ and tissue donor registry

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CHICAGO – Gov. Bruce Rauner today signed House Bill 1805, also known as the Drive for Life Act. The bill, which received bipartisan support, allows 16- and 17-year-

olds to express their wishes to become organ and tissue donors. Signing the bill into law will give hundreds of thousands of additional Illinoisans the opportunity to join the registry each year.

“So many people are waiting for life-saving organ transplants,” Gov. Rauner said. “In Illinois alone, more than 4,700 people are on the waiting list, and every year, around 300 people die waiting for a transplant. It’s tragic. We need to give everyone who wants to become an organ donor the opportunity to do so, and that’s exactly what this bill does.”

The Drive for Life Act will allow Illinois residents 16 years old and older to join the First Person Consent Organ and Tissue donor registry when they receive their driver’s licenses or state ID cards. While the law gives 16- and 17-year-olds the right to express their wishes to become an organ donor, parents and guardians still will have the right to give or revoke consent until the donor turns 18.



Secretary of State Jesse White and state legislators have been working with organ procurement organizations Mid-America Transplant Services and Gift of Hope Organ and Tissue Network to get the Drive for Life Act written into law.

“My goal for the Illinois Secretary of State's Organ and Tissue Donor program is to save lives by ensuring that organs and tissue are available for those in need,” Secretary of State White said. “This new law is a major step toward reaching that goal. I was proud to work with the advocacy groups, legislators and the governor to help make this law a reality.”

Illinois joins 47 other states that currently allow 16- and 17-year-olds to register as organ donors.

Bill No.: HB 1805, An Act Concerning Civil Law

Action: Signed

Effective: Immediately