

# **Jesse White Joins organ recipients and faith leaders to show support for National Donor Sabbath**

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SPRINGFIELD - Secretary of State Jesse White joined recipients, donor families and faith leaders to recognize National Donor Sabbath, an interfaith campaign aimed at educating religious communities about organ/tissue donation.



In attendance was Darvece Monson, a kidney recipient who was given a second chance at life due to the generosity of her organ donor. Her donor was Takiya Holmes, an 11-year-old innocent victim of gun violence who died in February. White was also joined by Rachel Angela Moore, a heart recipient and nurse as well as members of the First Ladies Health Initiative of Chicago.

“We recognize this weekend in an effort to raise awareness in faith communities because people often say that their religion is the reason they choose not to participate in the state’s organ and tissue donor registry,” White explained. “This is a myth we want to dispel since the majority of religions support and respect this act of generosity. The people in attendance are promoting and advocating donation and our recipients are examples of how organ donation improves the lives of many.”

Monson is featured in a 30-second Public Service Announcement (PSA) about organ /tissue donation, which was submitted to approximately 100 radio stations statewide to bring awareness to the program.

During the weekend of Nov. 10-12, faith communities in Illinois and across the country recognize National Donor Sabbath. Faith leaders and congregations participate in services and events to increase awareness of this vital program. According to the United Network for Organ Sharing, the majority of religious groups support organ and tissue donation including Catholicism, Protestantism, Islam and Judaism.

Currently, more than 116,000 people are waiting for organs nationally. In Illinois, approximately 4,700 people are on the waiting list. Sadly, about 300 people in this state die each year because organs are not available.

“Organ donation affects the lives of so many people. The gift of organ donation helped change the lives of Darvece Monson and Rachel Angela Moore,” White said. “I encourage people to discuss how their lives have been impacted by donation and urge others to consider becoming organ donors.”

Other faith leaders and partners participating in National Donor Sabbath weekend include First Lady Susan Smith of Apostolic Faith Church; First Lady LaToyia Ledbetter of Mount Pisgah MBC; First Lady LaTonya Jarrett of Blackwell-Israel Samuel AME Zion Church; the National Kidney Foundation; Eversight; and Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network.

For more information on organ/tissue donation or to register to become a donor, visit [LifeGoesOn.com](http://LifeGoesOn.com), call the Secre