

# Secretary White's Traffic Safety Advisory Committee meets in Chicago

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SPRINGFIELD - Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White's Traffic Safety Advisory Committee met today in Chicago to examine impaired driving laws and consider measures aimed at making Illinois roads safer by reducing impaired driving crashes and



fatalities.

“My mission as Secretary of State is to make the roads of Illinois safer than ever,” said White. “I reconvened the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee to review and develop innovative measures to further strengthen our state’s impaired driving laws. Although Illinois is ranked among the top states in the nation for efforts to fight drunk driving, I refuse to grow complacent.”

The advisory committee reviewed the following three measures designed to combat impaired driving:

- Strengthen DUI laws by revising the statute defining a first-time DUI offender. Under current statutory summary suspension law, motorists are considered first-time DUI offenders if five or more years have passed since their last DUI.
- Strengthen prosecution of DUI by allowing prosecutors to introduce as evidence past DUI offenses committed by the defendant to a jury during a trial. Currently, the law does not allow past DUI convictions to be introduced as evidence during a jury trial.
- Strengthen impaired driving laws by cracking down on impaired driving with a special emphasis on prescription drugs such as opioids. This measure is in response to the opioid epidemic and the increase in DUI cases involving the use of prescription drugs. Amends certain sections of the Illinois Vehicle Code to include prescription drugs alone, or in combination with alcohol, that may result in impairment and administrative sanctions.

The advisory committee, comprised of legislators, federal and state traffic safety experts and law enforcement officials, is scheduled to meet again on Monday, Jan. 29, to vote on the proposals and consider other traffic safety issues that may arise.

The Traffic Safety Advisory Committee consists of 12 members, including Secretary of State Jesse White as chairman; state Representatives: John D'Amico (D-Chicago), Mike McAuliffe (R-Chicago), Marcus Evans (D-Chicago) and Michael Unes (R-Pekin); state Senators: Martin Sandoval (D-Cicero) and Michael Connelly (R-Naperville); David Bradford, Northwestern University Center for Public Safety; Lieutenant Colonel Chris Trame, Illinois State Police; Shannon Alderman, Illinois Department of Transportation; Jenny Burke, National Safety Council; and Lyn Warren, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.