



**A Message from
Secretary of State
Jesse White**

Being knowledgeable about how government operates is key to an informed and involved citizenry. To assist in that effort, I am pleased to present the *2011-2012 Illinois Handbook of Government*. In an age of quick access to information via the Internet, the *Handbook* represents a traditional, time-honored resource for Illinois government information. For those who prefer an electronic format, the *Handbook* also is available at www.cyberdriveillinois.com.

As State Librarian, I am proud to feature the Illinois State Library on the cover along with an article on page 3. Established in 1839, the State Library has expanded its reach to provide library and literacy programs and services statewide, while maintaining its original mission of serving state officials and employees. Named after the late Illinois Poet Laureate, the Illinois State Library Gwendolyn Brooks Building has a strong foundation as the premier information resource for state government as well as the general public. I encourage you to learn more about the State Library and what it has to offer by visiting www.cyberdriveillinois.com.

As with tradition, the *Handbook* continues to feature photos and contact information for Illinois constitutional officers, legislators and members of Congress, as well as descriptions of the three branches of government. It also includes the U.S. and Illinois Constitutions to help students and those wanting to become U.S. citizens study for the required constitution exams.

I hope you find the *Illinois Handbook of Government* a valuable resource in learning more about state government and your elected officials.

Jesse White

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