



WHEREAS, there are 2,102 pending missing children under the age of 18 in the State of Illinois, which represents only a small percentage of the children that are estimated to be missing nationwide as reported through a national study conducted by the United States Department of Justice; and

WHEREAS, there are four different categories that classify missing children. The largest number of missing children are runaways, followed by those that have been abducted by family members, those that are lost, injured, or otherwise missing, and the smallest category, but the one in which the child is at the greatest risk of injury or death, are those that have been abducted by non-family members; and

WHEREAS, locating and safely returning missing children to their homes is a statewide, national, and international objective; and

WHEREAS, on August 29, 1985 in Chicago, Illinois, Governors from the states of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Missouri and Wisconsin signed the "Interstate Agreement on Missing and Exploited Children," and since then, the states of Ohio, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and Nebraska have also joined in the initiative. This agreement was the beginning of the development of an interstate network established to improve the process of identifying and recovering missing children in our communities; and

WHEREAS, in 2002, the Illinois State Police implemented the America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response (AMBER) Alert Notification Plan. AMBER Alert was developed as a quick and efficient way to notify the public and any city, town, village, county, or state law enforcement agency in Illinois, of specific information regarding the abduction of a child whose life may be in danger. To date, AMBER Alert has been instrumental in recovering 26 missing children; and

WHEREAS, inappropriate use of the Internet can expose our children to significant dangers, 53 Illinois State Police officers, certified to conduct NetSmartz workshops, have taught over 20,000 students, teachers, and parents how to stay safer on the Internet; and

WHEREAS, teaching your children to run away from danger, never letting your children go places alone, knowing where and with whom your children are at all times, talking openly with your children about safety and having a list of family members who can be contacted in case of an emergency, are among the list of preventative tips that will help keep your children safe from kidnapping and abductions:

THEREFORE, I, Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor of the State of Illinois, do hereby proclaim May 25, 2008 as **MISSING CHILDREN'S DAY** in Illinois, and encourage all citizens to observe this day by turning on porch lights and vehicle headlights to "LIGHT THE WAY HOME" for our missing children throughout the country.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Illinois to be affixed.



Deese White

SECRETARY OF STATE

Done at the Capitol, in the City of Springfield,
this NINTH day of MAY, in
the Year of Our Lord two thousand and
EIGHT, and of the State of Illinois
the one hundred and NINETIETH

Rod Blagojevich

GOVERNOR