



La Shawn K. Ford
State Representative - Eighth District - Illinois
www.lashawnford.com

Born to an unwed teenage mother in the Cabrini-Green housing projects in Chicago, never knowing his father, and adopted by his grandmother at birth, La Shawn K. Ford started his life with few material advantages. Growing up in the Austin and Englewood communities in Chicago, he attended Catholic elementary and high schools by the hard work, tenacity and love of a supportive family and community. Ford learned the value of hard work and made money for his family by shoveling snow, mowing lawns, collecting bottles and cans for recycling, and stocking produce in the local grocery store. Being a good student, Ford became the first in his family to attend a four year college when he entered Niles College Seminary and then Loyola University Chicago, where he played on the basketball team and earned a Bachelor of Science in Education with a minor in Political Science. For six years, Ford taught elementary school social studies and coached basketball in the Chicago Public Schools. As a licensed Real Estate Broker, he founded his own real estate business, Ford Desired Real Estate. He is an Illinois Licensed Insurance Agent and continues to be licensed as a teacher. He is the proud father of his daughter, Tia.

Because of his drive to increase social justice and address disparities in areas such as jobs, education, health, increasing opportunities for ex-offenders, small business development and housing, Ford was elected as state representative in 2006. He was re-elected in 2008, 2010, 2012 and 2014 and represents a diverse district which includes the West Side of Chicago and the near western suburbs.

A common theme in Ford's work is working for social justice, and in the 96th General Assembly Ford authored and passed a House Resolution with bipartisan sponsorship urging that social justice be the guiding principle in decision-making in the House of Representatives. Currently Chairman of the Small Business Empowerment & Workforce Development and Restorative Justice Committees, Ford has had significant success introducing and passing legislation which has become law in Illinois in areas as diverse as: Creation of the African American Employment Plan Act; Expansion of sealing of criminal records for certain Class 3 and 4 non-violent offenses; Expansion of HIV screening; Protecting the privacy of students who have HIV; Helping people use their LINK cards at farmers' markets; Lowering the compulsory school age to 6 years; Established a micro-loan program for qualified ex-offenders who establish their own businesses; Made law that not less than 10% of state contracts be awarded to small businesses; Established the Small Business Empowerment & Workforce Development Task Force; Established the Violence Prevention Task Force; Established Right to Privacy in the Workplace Act; Established Right to Privacy in the School Setting Act; Sponsored the Smart Phone Theft Protection Act; Sponsored a Foster Youth Summer Internship Pilot Program; Established the Council on Responsible Fatherhood; and Passed a Resolution urging Congress make all provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 permanent, among many others. Ford's State Employment Application Act (Ban the Box) passed both Houses in a previous General Assembly, and the intent of the law was established by the governor by Administrative Order.

Rep. Ford's office sends out job listings daily to thousands of people. He has received many awards, including Archdiocese of Chicago "Christifideles" and "Augustus Tolton" awards; Safer Foundation Carre Visionary Award; One of Chicago's Top 40 Game Changers by the Urban Business Roundtable; and Small Business Advocate Award by Small Business Advocacy Council. He is the Vice President of Membership of the Board of Directors of the Boy Scouts Pathway to Adventure Council of Northeast Illinois and Northwest Indiana. In 2014, Ford was elected Community Representative on the Local School Council (LSC) of George Rogers Clark Elementary School. He serves on Boards of Directors of: Austin Chamber of Commerce, Advisory Board for a Children's Museum in Austin, Peace Corner, Loretto Hospital, Fathers Who Care, the External Advisory Board for Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children, and the Board of Trustees of West Suburban Medical Center.