

Press Release...

from State Rep. La Shawn K. Ford

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

State Rep. La Shawn K. Ford

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Ford, Community Activists March to End Violence on West Side

CHICAGO – With Chicago’s West Side neighborhood of Austin on pace to claim the most shootings and murders in the city of Chicago, state Rep. La Shawn K. Ford, D-Chicago, state Rep. Camille Lilly, D-Chicago, community activists and supporters poured into the streets on Saturday, in an effort to end violence in the community.

“Every person affected by the thousands of incidents of gun violence in our city knows that the senseless violence needs to stop,” said Ford. “We have to build together, instead of tearing each other and our families down through all of this tension. If we can focus on building our children and community up, we have a chance for a brighter future. Let’s unite, as each of us strives to make the world a better place by first starting with the person in the mirror.”

Ford, families and friends of victims and community activists began their march through the streets of the Austin community on the corner of North Central Avenue and West Lake Street, and ended their march at Laramie and Jackson, where on Sunday, August 13, 2017, two men were killed as they were walking up the church steps to attend services at Friendship Baptist Church, which is led by Pastor Reginald E. Bachus. Austin saw the most murders in 2016 of any community area in Chicago, with 92, and also had the most total shootings in 2016, with 537, and is on pace to surpass these numbers in 2017. The aim of the march was to bring light to the amount of innocent life that is being taken in these slayings, and to call community members, elected officials and law enforcement to act to put a halt on violent crimes.

“On August 29, 2016, my son Elijah Sims was shot in the head in a cross-fire and made his transition the next morning in my arms, the day before his 17th birthday. I felt his first heart beats at birth and his last heart beats at death,” said Sharita Sims, the mother of Elijah Sims, a 16 year old shooting victim who lived in the Austin neighborhood. “Elijah’s death has impacted our lives tremendously. The sleepless nights, the uncontrollable panic attacks and watching my other children grieve hurts me on a daily basis. It hurts me as a mother not being able to do anything about it. We are constantly walking around in darkness and anger knowing that my son’s killer is still walking around enjoying life that they took from Elijah. The fact is that the killer is still free to kill again.”

Ford represents the 8th Representative District, which contains parts of Chicago’s Austin neighborhood and portions of Berwyn, Brookfield, Forest Park, La Grange, La Grange Park, North Riverside and Oak Park. For more information, please contact Rep. Ford’s district office at 773-378-5902 or visit www.LaShawnFord.com.





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