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FROM THE OFFICE OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE LA SHAWN K. FORD

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**For More Information:**

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## **Ford Advancing Legislation to Bring Fairness to How Prisoners are Counted for Legislative Redistricting**

**SPRINGFIELD, IL** – State Rep. La Shawn K. Ford (D-Chicago) is advancing legislation to change the way incarcerated prisoners are counted for Illinois' decennial redistricting of legislative boundaries. His bill would require the state to adjust federal census population numbers by counting prisoners at their last pre-incarceration address of residence rather than at the prison.

“Counting prisoners at the location of the prison unfairly skews population distribution figures, especially when they may only be there for a few months, and makes sparsely populated rural areas appear to have more residents,” Ford said. “When we get down to redrawing state and Congressional districts, we owe it to Illinois residents to do the best job possible in determining where people are living so that areas with high rates of incarceration don't lose out even more when it comes to determining their representatives at the state and national level.”

Ford's House Bill 4650 would require state and federal prison authorities in Illinois to report to the Illinois Secretary of State the name, age, gender, race and last pre-incarceration address of each prisoner in custody. The data would then be used to prepare an adjusted population distribution count that removes the prisoner from the residency count of the prison location and adds them to the count of their last known residence location.

“Redrawing state and Congressional district boundaries every ten years is one of the most important duties of state government, and we need to get it right,” Ford said. “Not only is it important that we count everyone at their permanent address, it's also important that every citizen complete their census questionnaire so that our community does not get shortchanged when it comes to allocating federal dollars and resources.”

Ford's legislation passed the House State Government Administration Committee and is currently before the full House for further consideration. For more information, call Ford's constituent service office at (773) 378-5902.

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