

Press Release...



FROM THE OFFICE OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE LA SHAWN K. FORD

For Immediate Release:

April 26, 2010

For More Information:

State Rep. La Shawn K. Ford

(773) 378-5902

Ford to hold Town Hall Meeting Concerning the National Guard and Violence Prevention

CHICAGO – State Representative La Shawn K. Ford (D-Chicago) will hold a Town Hall meeting on Monday, May 10, to discuss ideas with citizens interested in combating the escalating violence in Chicago. This Town Hall meeting builds on yesterday's press conference at which State Rep. Ford and State Rep. John Fritchey (D-Chicago) called on Governor Pat Quinn to work with Chicago Mayor Richard Daley and Chicago Police Superintendent Jody Weis to deploy Illinois National Guard troops to prevent violence in especially troubled areas.

113 people have been killed in Chicago so far this year, the same number of troops killed in Iraq and Afghanistan combined. "The unfortunate reality is that we have another war that is just as deadly taking place right here in our own backyard," said Rep. Fritchey at the press conference. "Is this a drastic call to action? Of course it is. But it is warranted when we are losing residents to violence at such an alarming rate."

"The Chicago Police Department and Mayor Daley are working hard to combat violence, but we cannot accept it as a normal situation that someone is shot and killed in Chicago almost every day, with the West Side citizens whom I represent being affected at a much greater rate," said Ford. "We need more help to combat violence in our communities, and we need to put together a comprehensive plan which includes the National Guard to secure the peace and to work respectfully to win the hearts and minds of the citizens in the most violence-prone areas, to prevent violence from happening in the first place." Noting that Police Superintendent Weis has pointed out that most violent crime occurs on just 9 percent of the city's blocks, Ford said the National Guard could work closely with police to target these areas.

Noting that violence and crime also lead to a decrease in property values, discourages people from establishing businesses, and hurts existing businesses, Rep. Ford urges a comprehensive approach to violence prevention, including the improvement of educational and employment opportunities. "Increasing security by combating and preventing crime is only part of the solution," Ford said. "To address the root causes of violence, we need to improve the educational and job opportunities for citizens that live on those 9 percent of city blocks, including jobs for workers in construction and other trades."

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Regarding the current debate about the state budget, Rep. Ford stated, “A state tax increase should only be considered when the state spends money wisely to help all citizens, especially those who are most vulnerable, to have access to basic opportunities to be able to enjoy life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”

For more information, call Rep. Ford’s office at 773-378-5902, or visit www.lashawnford.com.

What:	Town Hall Meeting on Violence Prevention
Who:	State Rep. La Shawn K. Ford Willie Williams III Youth Foundation Community and Government Officials
When:	Monday, May 10, 2010, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Where:	Ronald McNair Elementary School, 4820 W. Walton, Chicago, IL 60651