

Press Release...



FROM THE OFFICE OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE LA SHAWN K. FORD

For Immediate Release:

November 24, 2012

For More Information:

State Rep. La Shawn K. Ford

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Rep. Ford Writing a Bill to Give Small Businesses More Opportunities

Introduces Concept on Small Business Saturday

CHICAGO – Hearing of the barriers confronted by construction subcontractors as they compete for state contracts, state Rep. La Shawn K. Ford (D-Chicago) is writing a bill that addresses one of the more important barriers confronted by small businesses.

Currently, construction subcontractors must pay a fee to join their labor union which can cost up to \$15,000 per year as a prerequisite to apply for jobs available from the project's general contractor. Without a contract in hand, this prerequisite is often more than the small business can bear.

“The ability to be signatory to a union on a project-by-project basis will allow our firm to participate on opportunities that might otherwise be restricted,” said James Webb, owner of A Stroke of Genius Painting. “In the process, we are able to build both our resume and our capacity to become a permanent signatory over a period of time. We think this is a good way to encourage minority participation and to build small businesses in Illinois. I look forward to working with Rep. Ford to write the best legislation that will give more opportunities to small businesses in Illinois.”

To give more small businesses a shot at these contracts, Rep. Ford is writing legislation that will allow subcontractors to “pay as they go” as the contract is awarded. This lesser amount will allow more subcontractors to participate in the process. This will be limited to 9 “pay as you go” agreements in a three year period. “In this time of economic challenges, we must do all we can to support small businesses. It is great to work with James Webb and Schilon Alexander from Suburban Minority Contractors Association (SMCA) as we begin to write the legislation that will support this idea and will strengthen relationships with the unions,” said Rep. Ford.

For more information, contact one of Ford's constituent service offices; call the Oak Park office at (708) 445-3673 or the Chicago office at (773) 378-5902, or visit www.lashawnford.com.

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