



Media Advisory...

from State Representative La Shawn K. Ford

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 5, 2019

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

State Rep. La Shawn K. Ford

773-378-5902

Ford and Community Stakeholders Hold West Side State of Emergency Meeting

CHICAGO – State Representative La Shawn K. Ford, D-Chicago, and community stakeholders will hold an emergency community meeting for the Austin community on Saturday, June 8, 2019 at the West Austin Child Development Center. On May 31, 2019, Ford passed House Resolution 435 which concludes: “we commend every endeavor to address the critical issues plaguing the Austin community”. Ford will be joined by numerous community members and organizations to demand that Illinois acknowledge that the second largest community in Chicago, with more than 97,000 residents, is in a state of emergency.

“The Austin community will have their voices heard this Saturday,” said Ford. “Austin has been patient, but the community refuses to sit back and wait for state resources while people are dying. Austin is in a state of emergency and the community demands action now.”

Austin is a community plagued with poverty and has some of the nation’s highest death rates due to chronic diseases and senseless violence. In 2019, through June 2, the Austin community has suffered 23 murders, more than any other community area in Chicago. The average life expectancy of residents on the West Side of Chicago is only 68.2 years of life; individuals living just seven miles east on I-290 live to be approximately 88 years old; the community has one of the highest infant mortality rates in the city at 10.5 percent compared to Chicago’s overall rate of 7.9 percent. Austin is also known as an epicenter of the opioid overdose crisis in the state of Illinois, with an 2017 opioid overdose death rate twice that of Chicago as a whole and 3.75 times that of Illinois as a whole. 67 people died of an opioid overdose in Austin in 2017, the highest number of any community area in Chicago, according to chicagohealthatlas.org.

“We have just passed a progressive agenda in Springfield, with a \$40 Billion budget spending deal and a \$40 billion capital project bill,” said Ford. “A casino and legalized recreational cannabis are both coming to Chicago, bringing in billions of dollars of revenue to the city and the state. It’s time for the people to be cut in!”

WHO: State Representative La Shawn K. Ford, West Austin Child Development Center, Westside Health Authority, NAACP, Beautiful Angels, Chicago Fathers for Change, Books over Balls, HSI, Bobby E Wright CBHC, Chicago State University, Our Youth Mentoring Program, Maxwell Little, Chantal Grant, St. Martin de Porres, ECCSC, Back 2 School Throwdown

WHAT: West Side State of Emergency Safety in the Community Meeting

WHEN: Saturday, June 8, 2019, 2:30 p.m.

WHERE: West Austin Child Development Center: 4920 W. Madison Chicago, Illinois 60644

For more information, please contact Ford’s constituent service office at 773-378-5902 or email

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