



La Shawn K. Ford

State Representative - Eighth District - Illinois

www.lashawnford.com

Born to an unwed teenage mother in the Cabrini-Green housing projects in Chicago, never knowing his father, and adopted by his grandmother at birth, La Shawn K. Ford started his life with few material advantages. Growing up in the Austin and Englewood communities in Chicago, he attended Catholic elementary and high schools by the hard work, tenacity and love of a supportive family and community. Ford learned the value of hard work and made money for his family by shoveling snow, mowing lawns, collecting bottles and cans for recycling, and stocking produce in the local grocery store. Being a good student, Ford became the first in his family to attend a four year college when he entered Niles College Seminary and then Loyola University Chicago, where he played on the basketball team and earned a Bachelor of Science in Education with a minor in Political Science. For six years, Ford taught elementary school social studies and coached basketball in the Chicago Public Schools. As a licensed Real Estate Broker, he founded his own real estate business, Ford Desired Real Estate. He is an Illinois Licensed Insurance Agent and continues to be licensed as a teacher. He is the proud father of his daughter, Tia.

Because of his drive to increase social justice and address disparities in areas such as jobs, education, and health, wanting to increase opportunities for ex-offenders, small business development and housing, Ford was elected as state representative in 2006. He was re-elected in 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, & 2018 and represents a diverse district which includes the West Side of Chicago and the near western suburbs.

A common theme in Ford's work is working for social justice, and Ford authored and passed a House Resolution with bipartisan sponsorship urging that social justice be the guiding principle in decision-making in the House of Representatives. Currently Chair of Appropriations-Higher Education and member of the Financial Institutions, Personnel & Pensions, and Public Utilities House Committees, Ford was the first Chairs of the Restorative Justice and Small Business Empowerment & Workforce Development Committees. Ford has successfully introduced and passed legislation into law in areas as diverse as: Creation of the African American Employment Plan; Creation of the State Employment Application Act (Ban the Box); Creating Micro-Loan Small Business Program for Ex-offenders; Expanding Sealing of Records of Non-violent Ex-offenders; Limiting Bail Bond Costs; Ensuring at least 10% of State Contracts go to Small Businesses; Six Bills Expanding HIV Screening; Lowering School Age to 6 from 7; Creating a Remedial Reading & Math Summer School Program; Easing the use of LINK cards at Farmer's Markets; Naming Cicero Avenue as Nelson Mandela Road; Naming Roosevelt Road as Muhammad Ali Road; Naming part of I-55 as Barack Obama Presidential Expressway; Creating Commissions on Responsible Fatherhood, Young Adult Employment, Small Business Empowerment & Workforce Development, Violence Prevention, Child Care Reform, Firearm Public Awareness, & the Economic and Social Costs of Slavery; Co-founding the West Side Heroin Task Force; Re-establishing Funding for Child Care; and Passing a Resolution urging Congress make all provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 permanent. Ford has sponsored 12 Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Family HEALTH CHALLENGE events and has secured grants for District Libraries, Parks and Fire Departments. Ford has held many Career & Health Fairs & Town Hall Meetings on Education, Elected School Board, Concealed Carry, Heroin Crisis and many others.

Rep. Ford's office sends out job listings daily to thousands of people. He has received many awards, including Archdiocese of Chicago "Christifideles" and "Augustus Tolton" awards; Safer Foundation Carre Visionary Award; One of Chicago's Top 40 Game Changers by the Urban Business Roundtable; and Small Business Advocate Award by Small Business Advocacy Council. In 2014, Ford was elected to the Local School Council (LSC) of George Rogers Clark Elementary School. He serves on Boards of Directors of The Loretto Hospital; Fathers Who Care; the External Advisory Board for Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children; and the Board of Trustees of West Suburban Medical Center.