



July 18, 2018

Happy 100th Birthday, Nelson Mandela!

This year, I am happy to host the 5th year anniversary of the naming of Mandela Road on the West Side of Chicago and the 100th anniversary celebration of Nelson Mandela's birthday. It is great to be joined by Alderman Emma Mitts, Westside Health Authority, Good Neighbor Austin, Loretto Hospital, Healing Temple Church, New Yerusalem Lodge # 158 F, AM PHA, Schweet, Brown Sugar Bakery, Jamaican Grill, and others for the celebration.

Nelson Mandela International Day was launched in recognition of Nelson Mandela's birthday on July 18, via unanimous decision of the UN General Assembly in 2009. It was inspired by a call Nelson Mandela made a year earlier for the next generation to take on the burden of leadership in addressing the world's social injustices when he said that "it is in your hands now". The celebration is intended to be more than a celebration of Mandela's life and legacy, but a global movement to honor his life's work and act to change the world for the better.

To honor Nelson Mandela, who was a South African statesman, Nobel Peace Prize winner, and first President of the post-apartheid South Africa, I introduced House Joint Resolution 89 in 2014 designating the portion of Cicero Avenue from Grand Avenue to Roosevelt Road as Mandela Road. The resolution passed both the House and the Senate in unanimous, bipartisan votes. The dedication of the naming of Mandela Road occurred on July 18, 2014, Mandela's birthday.

On every July 18th we honor President Mandela and we join the movement of change-makers to do our part to in the spirit of Mandela to spread social justice and freedom for all. This is our chance to become a part of a continuous global movement for good. Let all of us emulate the servant-leader we loved by becoming servant-leaders ourselves. By becoming a Mandela Day change-maker and doing something that effects positive change every day, we can show that actions speak louder than words.

Sincerely,

La Shawn K. Ford
State Representative-Eighth District