

# Press Release...



FROM THE OFFICE OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE LA SHAWN K. FORD

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**For More Information:**

State Rep. La Shawn K. Ford

773-378-5902

## Ford Urges Toy Guns To Be Brightly Colored

**CHICAGO** – State Representative La Shawn K. Ford (D-Chicago) called for federal legislation today which would help to prevent tragic shooting deaths and increase the safety of police officers by better identifying replica or toy guns from functioning firearms.

In the wake of the shooting of 12 year old Tamir Rice by police officers in Cleveland, Ohio responding to 911 calls for a person with a firearm, Ford has filed HR 1369 in the Illinois House of Representatives (<http://ilga.gov/legislation/BillStatus.asp?DocTypeID=HR&DocNum=1369&GAID=12&SessionID=85&LegID=83246>). "Replica guns or BB guns can look identical to a real firearm, and they also share the same potential to produce similar senseless and tragic results when in the hands of children," said Ford. "This legislation calls for Congress to act to protect children and give responding law enforcement officers a better chance of distinguishing what is a deadly threat and what is a toy. Officers must make split-second, life or death decisions when responding to calls indicating an armed individual. We owe it to law enforcement officials to give additional information so they may make the right call to protect our communities."

Federal Law currently requires a blaze orange ring to plug the barrel of replica guns; however, as in the case of Tamir Rice, this safety measure was missing on the toy gun he was holding that fatal morning. HR 1369 states replica guns should be in bright colors, making them much easier to identify. A United States Department of Justice Report on law enforcement engagement and response to toy guns estimated there were at least 200 incidents per year (U.S. Department of Justice - [Bureau of Justice Statistics Paper from 1990, Toy Guns - Involvement in Crime and Encounters with Police](#)). Unfortunately, since the report's publication in 1990, this number is almost certainly grown, putting many more officers and citizens in deadly jeopardy.

In similar legislation, California Governor Jerry Brown signed the California Imitation Firearm Safety Act [SB 199](#) into law in September. This act requires BB guns and simulated weapons to have a florescent coloration stripe on specific locations of the simulated weapon and the trigger guard.

"With gun violence plaguing the streets of Chicago and many of its suburbs, we must do everything in our power to make a safer environment for our kids. The labeling of replica guns will save lives, and it is the right thing to do for public safety," Ford concluded.

For more information, contact one of Ford's constituent service offices: 816 S. Oak Park Avenue in Oak Park at [708-445-3673](tel:708-445-3673), 4800 W. Chicago Avenue in Chicago at [773-378-5902](tel:773-378-5902) or in the Stratton Office Building in Springfield at [217-782-5962](tel:217-782-5962).

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