

Press Release...



FROM THE OFFICE OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE LA SHAWN K. FORD

For Immediate Release:
April 9, 2015

For More Information:
State Rep. La Shawn K. Ford
773-378-5902

Ford: Restoring Justice & Criminal Justice Reform

Critical to Chicagoland & Illinois Communities

Will Host "Restoring Justice Summit" This Saturday

CHICAGO - State Rep. La Shawn K. Ford, D-Chicago, Chairperson of the Illinois House Restorative Justice Committee, will host the 2015 Chicagoland Restoring Justice Summit on Saturday, April 11, 2015 in Chicago. The goals of the summit are: to educate members of the community about their legal rights (on matters such as housing, criminal, family law, immigration, etc.); to provide Chicagoland residents with the opportunity to learn about legal resources in their own neighborhood; and to bring together Illinois' public officials with community residents and organizations to discuss ideas and recommendations for justice reform. Re-entry and recidivism, juvenile justice, sentencing, and community-police relations are among the topics to be highlighted. The day will begin with a Justice Reform Session moderated by WVON's Cliff Kelly, at which participants will meet with elected officials. Workshops and presentations by resource vendors will follow.

"The feeling nationwide is summed up well by singer John Legend in his Oscar speech, '...the time for JUSTICE is NOW....period,'" said Ford. "Too many people in our communities have suffered from, and are still suffering from, the effects of unjust laws in our system. In an effort to generate true reform, we must listen to people who, along with their family members, are directly impacted by the laws, policies, and practices that are put into place. And, we must be willing to make changes when necessary. We are inviting everyone to the Justice Summit to share their recommendations for real justice reform with their federal, state, and local officials. Make no mistake - we have a clear purpose in our efforts: the ideas shared by people at the Summit will not just sit on a desk; after the event, these recommendations will be shared with legislators and teams like the governor's Criminal Justice Reform Commission to create policies and laws for real change in our communities. While at the Summit, we also encourage residents to take advantage of the chance to learn about their rights at workshops presented by volunteer attorneys who practice in these areas of law, and to meet people with resources who can assist those who are confronting legal issues. Thousands have been helped to seal their records with the new sealing law - this is a great opportunity for people to bring their rap sheets or arrest records and work with lawyers in the process of sealing eligible records. This event is happening right in our own backyards, so we should all make the most of this rare opportunity. Let's restore justice in our communities together; we hope to see everyone at the Restoring Justice Summit!"

Ford/Restoring Justice Summit, p. 2/con't.

“We are very excited to join with State Rep. Ford and partners like The John Marshall Law School and NAACP, as well as members of the Illinois House Restorative Justice Committee and other elected officials from the state, federal, and local levels of government,” said Attorney Melissa L. Williams, Executive Director of the Wiley Resource Center and the Criminal Justice Chair of the 8th District Advisory Committee. “We hope this Summit will be a catalyst which leads to many events of its kind in the state of Illinois. We applaud Governor Rauner in his efforts to address issues affecting so many in our communities through the creation of the Criminal Justice Reform Commission, and we hope they will also be able to join us at the Summit. This promises to be a great event, and we do firmly believe that the ideas and recommendations exchanged can create the reform desired by so many.”

WHO: State Rep. La Shawn K. Ford and the Illinois House Restorative Justice Committee; Wiley Resource Center – Legal Support Program, NFP/Op24; The John Marshall Law School, Chicago; Dominguez Legal Justice Center; NAACP; Cabrini Green Legal Aid; PLCCA; Chicago State University; Chicago Legal Clinic; Lawyers Committee for Better Housing; Family Rescue; Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago, Illinois Department of Human Rights, Cook County Commission on Human Rights, The Voice Newspapers, and more...

All IL State Reps and Senators; U.S. Senators and Reps from IL; Cook County President and Board of Commissioners, State’s Attorney, Public Defender, Chief Judge, Court Clerk and Sheriff; and current Chicago Mayor, Aldermen, and Police Superintendent have been invited to attend. All Officials are welcome.

CONFIRMED to Date: Illinois State Reps Mary Flowers (31st), Camille Lilly (78th) and Emanuel “Chris” Welch (7th); the Honorable Timothy C. Evans, Chief Judge of the Circuit Court of Cook County; the office of Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle; Cook County Clerk of Court Dorothy Brown; the office of Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart; Cook County Public Defender; Chicago Police Department; Cook County Commissioners Richard Boykin (1st) and John Fritchey (12th)

WHAT: 2015 Chicagoland Restoring Justice Summit

WHEN: Saturday, April 11, 2015, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. - Doors Open 9:30 a.m.

WHERE: Michele Clark High School – 5101 W. Harrison St. – Chicago, Illinois 60644

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), visit www.lashawnford.com, or email rj@lashawnford.com for those who wish to testify or submit ideas and recommendations for justice reform.