

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

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Ford Establishes Commission to Reform Child Care in Illinois

SPRINGFIELD, IL – State Representative La Shawn K. Ford, D-Chicago, has passed House Resolution 254 unanimously through the House which creates the Commission to Reform Child Care in Illinois. The Commission is charged to study current local and state provisions involving child care and make recommendations to the House of Representatives by September 1, 2015 to help ensure that there are simple and fair systems to provide quality child care that is affordable for families, especially those on low incomes. The Commission is also charged to develop a legislative and administrative agenda that would effectively address the issues surrounding child care in the state of Illinois. Members of the Commission will be appointed by the Speaker of the House and the Minority Leader of the House.

“There are over a million families with children under the age of 18 throughout the state of Illinois, and each family has a unique and different structure, socioeconomic status, and need for child care,” said Ford. “Brain research over the last 20 years has proven that the first five years of a child's life is critical for long-term development. During these first five years, sustained relationships with nurturing, supportive, and engaging primary child care givers are the most crucial components for the development of a healthy child. Because we know this, it is especially imperative that these relationships are provided to those who are socially and economically disadvantaged. Low-income families are the least likely to have access to this crucial information. Parents in these families are more likely to work outside of their homes because of the need to make ends meet while dealing with other stresses related to living in poverty.”

The average cost of private high quality child care in Illinois for an infant is nearly \$2,000 a month. A family headed by a single parent making \$10/hour will only earn \$1,600 a month. “This discrepancy between income and the costs of child care takes away any opportunity for high quality care and teaching to be provided to these children,” said Ford. “If we do not ensure adequate access to quality early learning environments for this already disadvantaged population, then we are ultimately perpetuating cycles of poverty.”

“The greatest gift we can give a child is the opportunity to have a fair shot at a life of success, and high quality child care and early education are the greatest equalizers we have to afford this opportunity,” concluded Ford.

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), or visit www.lashawnford.com.

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