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From State Representative La Shawn K. Ford

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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Ford Measure Calls on Universities to Address Growing Population of Homeless Students

SPRINGFIELD, IL – In response to the large number of homeless college students in Illinois, state Rep. La Shawn K. Ford, D-Chicago, unanimously passed a measure out of the House Higher Education Committee on Tuesday urging the state’s public universities to adopt a program to provide housing scholarships to those without a home.

“Going to college is a dream for many young people, but for students without a place to call home, there is a good chance that they will not finish their studies,” Ford said. “We must find a way to provide these students with safe, supportive housing, so that they have a better chance to succeed and break the cycle of homelessness.”

Ford’s resolution calls on the boards of trustees of each public university in Illinois to adopt a program that provides housing scholarships to college students that are homeless and to include funding for such a program in annual appropriation requests to the General Assembly. A recent *Chicago Tribune* article highlighted the struggle that homeless college students face and the difficulty that universities have faced identifying and tracking this population. According to the article, Illinois has the third-highest homeless college student population in the nation, estimated at 3,400 during the most recent school year.

“The Chicago Coalition for the Homeless strongly supports Rep. Ford's resolution for bringing attention to the growing number of college students struggling with homelessness,” Jennifer Cushman, Policy Specialist for the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, said. “Educational attainment leads to higher future earnings thereby reducing the risk of chronic homelessness, incarceration and long-term dependence on government benefits. Funding housing for homeless young people who pursue higher education is a cost-effective investment that supports youth facing significant barriers as they seek a better life. We commend Rep. Ford for championing this important issue.”

House Resolution 135 now awaits adoption before the full House.

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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