

# 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

## Governor Signs Ford's Bill Which Limits Bail Bond Fees

**SPRINGFIELD** – Last week, Governor Rauner signed into law legislation introduced by state Representative La Shawn K. Ford, D-Chicago, which limits bail bond fees for those cleared of their charges. “This legislation was a joint effort of elected officials from the state and the county, working together,” said Ford. “I was happy to work on this meaningful legislation with 12th District Cook County Commissioner John Fritchey. In a bipartisan movement, both Democrats and Republicans voted for the bill, proving that representatives and senators from both parties can come together in Springfield to accomplish meaningful change.”

Under the current law, after a defendant is cleared of a crime or if charges are dropped, the county clerk must return 90 percent of the amount that the individual deposited to make bail and keeps 10 percent as a bail bond cost. For example, if a person post \$50,000 bail bond to the clerk to be released, following dismissal or acquittal, the clerk returns \$45,000 to the defendant and keeps \$5000 as a bail bond cost. House Bill 1119, now Public Act 98-0412, limits the amount to \$100 that the Cook County Clerk can retain as a bond processing fee (<http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/billstatus.asp?DocNum=1119&GAID=13&GA=99&DocTypeID=HB&LegID=85598&SessionID=88>).

“The new law aims to help make our justice system a little fairer for those who post a bail bond to be released from Cook County jail, but who are later found innocent of the charges brought against them,” said Ford.

Republican state Representative Ron Sandack, R-Downers Grove, said, "This is a commonsense, bipartisan bill that reforms the bail bond system in Cook County which disproportionately hurts low-income people. I look forward to finding common ground with Rep. Ford and the entire General Assembly as we continue to tackle the challenges our state faces.”

"I am pleased that the Illinois House unanimously passed our initiative to eliminate excessive charges for bail bond processing fees in Cook County, an issue that is unjust and disproportionately impacts low-income people and minorities,” said Commissioner John Fritchey.

The new law becomes effective on Jan 1, 2016. Ford is currently working on additional legislation which would eliminate bail bond for all non-violent offenders.

“As the Chairman of the House Restorative Justice Committee, my mission is to help reform the criminal justice system and ensure that everyone, regardless of their race or socio-economic status, is treated fairly,” said Ford. “Reducing bail bond processing costs and making the system fairer for all are steps in that direction.”

For more information, contact 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 the Stratton Office Building in Springfield at [217-782-5962](tel:217-782-5962) or visit [www.lashawnford.com](http://www.lashawnford.com).

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