

News...

from State Rep. La Shawn K. Ford

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Rep. Ford Honors Muhammad Ali with Memorial Street Naming

CHICAGO – Commemorating the life of one of the world’s most renowned and revered sports legends, civil rights activists and cultural icons, state Rep. La Shawn Ford, D-Chicago, passed a measure through the Illinois House that names a segment of Roosevelt Road in Chicago after the world champion boxer, Muhammad Ali.

“In an atmosphere that has not been the most encouraging for growth and improvement in our communities, it is important that we honor and bring to light the work of the legendary Muhammad Ali,” said Ford. “He was a special man who used his stardom to fight injustices that continue to plague us. Throughout his time, he was a shining beacon in an environment that wanted him and his message to be marginalized and shrouded in darkness.”

Ford was the sponsor of House Resolution 1317, which passed the Illinois House unanimously on a vote of 104-0. The resolution designates a portion of Roosevelt Road as Muhammad Ali Road. The honored stretch of road extends from Cicero Avenue to Austin Avenue in Chicago. This street naming comes just two years after Ford passed a measure naming of a stretch of Cicero Avenue for the first president of the Republic of South Africa, Nelson Mandela. The stretch named for Ali will meet Nelson Mandela Road at the intersection of Cicero and Roosevelt Avenues in Chicago’s Austin neighborhood. This is fitting because the Austin community has so much culture and history, but has been afflicted by the same violence and turmoil against which both Ali and Mandela were known to take a stand.

“Although he wasn’t born here, Muhammad Ali was a Chicagoan for more than a decade,” said Ford. “I hope that this public recognition will help his legacy live on in the community. It is my hope that a young man or woman will see these street names and be inspired to learn more about these heroes of African heritage. I want them to learn to lead, and not let the injustices in the world they live in go unnoticed or uncorrected.”

Ford represents the Eighth Representative District, which contains parts of Chicago’s Austin neighborhood and portions of Berwyn, Brookfield, Forest Park, La Grange, North La Grange, North Riverside and Oak Park. For more information, please contact Rep. Ford’s district office at 773-378-5902 or 708-445-3673 or visit www.lashawnford.com.