

Media Advisory



From State Representative La Shawn K. Ford

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 29, 2018

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

State Rep. La Shawn Ford

Office: 217-557-4054

Ford, Lt. Gov. Sanguinetti and 5 Department Heads Push for End to West Side's Heroin Crisis

CHICAGO- Representative La Shawn K. Ford, D-Chicago, co-founder of the West Side Heroin Task Force, and Lt. Governor Evelyn Sanguinetti, will commemorate the 50th Year anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to call for action to end the epidemic of overdose deaths from heroin on the West Side.

The West Side of Chicago continues to lead the state in deaths from overdoses due to heroin and other opioids and also suffers from street violence resulting from the overwhelming access to these street drugs. For this meeting, Ford is bringing together Lt. Governor Evelyn Sanguinetti; Director of Public Health Nirav D. Shah, M.D., J.D.; Director of DCFS Beverly "BJ" Walker; Secretary of Human Services James T. Dimas; Asst. Sec. of Human Services Maria Bruni, Ph.D.; Director of HFS Felicia F. Norwood; officials from the city of Chicago & Cook County; local health care and social providers; and people who are going through recovery themselves.

"The availability of heroin is rising across the country, and the West Side has borne the brunt of this crisis regarding addiction and overdose deaths. Much can be done to treat those suffering from opioid use disorders and to reverse overdoses should they happen so that they aren't fatal," said Ford.

Ford co-sponsored House Bill 1, The Heroin Crisis Act, which became law in Sept. 2015 and includes coverage of addiction, enforcement of parity regulations, and coverage of the important life-saving drug naloxone under Medicaid. Since its inception, the West Side Heroin Task Force been at the forefront of combatting heroin usage and heroin overdose prevention.

For more information about this event, contact Ford's constituent service office: Stratton Office Building in Springfield at 217-782-5962.

WHO: State Rep. La Shawn K. Ford, Lt. Gov. Evelyn Sanguinetti, Nirav D. Shah, Dir. (IDPH), Beverly Walker, Dir. (DCFS), James T. Dimas, Sec. (IDHS), Dr. Maria Bruni, Asst. Sec. (IDHS), Felicia F. Norwood, Dir. (HFS), George N. Miller, Pres. (Loretto Hospital), Dr. Rashad Saafir, Pres. (Bobby E. Wright CBHC), Morris Reed, CEO (WHA), Neli Vazquez-Rowland, Pres. (A Safe Haven), Siri Hibbler, Pres. (FODVC), Rev. Walter Jones (West Garfield Park CS), George Williams, Vice Pres. (Community & Government Affairs), Garfield Park CC, Fathers Who Care & TASC

WHAT: Ford, Lt. Gov. Sanguinetti and 5 Department Heads Push for End to West Side's Heroin Crisis

WHEN: Wednesday, April 4th, 2018 @ 8:00 – 10:00 a.m.

WHERE: Loretto Hospital, 645 S. Central Ave., Chicago, Illinois 60644