



# Press Release...

*from State Representative La Shawn K. Ford*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

State Rep. La Shawn K. Ford

773-378-5902

## **Ford Urges JB to Deal with Racism in Campaign**

**CHICAGO** – Illinois State Representative La Shawn K. Ford, D-Chicago, is calling on J.B. Pritzker to be a leader and deal with the charges of racism in his campaign. Last week, according to the Chicago Tribune, staffers who have worked for J.B. Pritzker’s campaign filed a federal lawsuit alleging racial discrimination in their months on the job, alleging that African-American and Latino campaign staffers “are herded into race-specific positions where they are expected to interact with the public, offered no meaningful chance for advancement, and receive less favorable treatment than their white counterparts.” Of the 10 campaign staffers named as plaintiffs in the suit, nine are black and one is a Latina.

The plaintiffs’ attorneys have asked for \$7.5 million, plus the hiring of a diversity officer in the final weeks of the race, and anti-discrimination training. According to the Sun-Times, one former worker saying she’d personally spoke to the candidate about discrimination. “He promised me to address it, and I was laid off,” said Kayla Hogan, a former field organizer for the campaign.

“As a Democrat who supports JB’s election to be governor of our state, I urge JB to use this opportunity to confront racism and announce that he will add fighting racism to his platform moving forward,” said Ford. “JB should look into these claims and be outraged that this happened, and these claims should be investigated.”

“It is important to note that JB has not been personally accused of racism, but we can never ignore a person’s personal feelings about their treatment,” said Ford. “Racism is an American problem, and we see it in contracts and opportunities in Illinois. If JB becomes governor, as I hope he does, he will be dealing with this issue all the time. We have heard claims of racism in the Departments of Transportation and Corrections, among many others. This is an opportunity for JB to show that he will be a governor who will take claims of racism seriously and will deal with them right away. Our state can’t get better if we don’t take racism seriously.”

Ford also stated, “Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, ‘Like life, racial understanding is not something that we find but something that we must create’.” “This is a great opportunity for JB to create more racial understanding,” said Ford.

“And, rather than dealing with this through lawsuits and counter lawsuits, bitter statements, and charges of extortion, I feel that this would be a perfect case for using the principles of restorative justice,” said Ford. “As the Chair of the House Committee on Restorative Justice, I could see this episode be resolved successfully by calling victims and those they accuse together with a restorative justice facilitator to work out a healing solution for all. This problem caused harm, and justice should focus on repairing that harm. The people most affected by this problem should be able to participate in its resolution.”

Ford represents the Eighth District, which contains parts of Chicago’s Austin neighborhood and portions of Berwyn, Brookfield, Forest Park, La Grange, La Grange Park, North Riverside and Oak Park. For more information, please contact Rep. Ford’s district office at 773-378-5902 or visit [www.LaShawnFord.com](http://www.LaShawnFord.com).

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