



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

SB1724 Water Rate Bill Passes the House

SPRINGFIELD IL- SB1724 (Water Rate Bill) has passed in the house today. SB1724 requires a review of water rates in Illinois to ensure they are affordable and fair. The legislation was sponsored by Sen. John Curran (R-Woodridge) and Rep. La Shawn K. Ford (D-Chicago). The passing of SB1724 will create a water rate advisory committee to examine how much communities pay for water in addition to determining how those rates are set.

"I am happy to say that today, through a bipartisan effort, SB1724 has passed," said Ford. "We finally will be able to fairly monitor the rates of water for citizens of Illinois. It is only right that the system is transparent, and allows everyone to know what they are being charged for."

Under the measure, water provided from Lake Michigan would be assessed by December 2020, before rates in the rest of the state would subsequently be analyzed. The bipartisan effort came to light after a report in the Chicago Tribune's Water Drain series. As reported in the Tribune, there is substantial variation in water rates charged to users of Lake Michigan water. The investigation also found that residents of towns with majority African American residents pay a monthly water bill that is 20% higher than towns with majority white populations. Some of those towns also lose over one-third of their water to leaking infrastructure.

"I believe that with SB1724 being passed, the water rate advisory committee will help keep the residents in Illinois confident their state will operate in a legit system," said Ford. "Water is a basic right, and I am glad we can keep it affordable and fair in Illinois."

The committee would comprise of academic experts and representatives from numerous state agencies, which include the state Environmental Protection Agency, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, the attorney general's office and the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. The legislation is currently awaiting the governor's signature.

For more information, please contact Rep. Ford's district office at 773-378-5902 or email repford@lashawnford.com.

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