PRESS RELEASE

. . . from the Illinois House of Representatives

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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FOR MORE IMFORMATION
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Ford Announces Census Art Contest

OAK PARK, IL - State Representative La Shawn K. Ford (D-Chicago) announced Thursday that he will sponsor a "Count Me In" Census Poster Contest to encourage residents to participate in the 2010 Census. Students in grades 6 – 12 living in the Eight District will be eligible to participate.

"Quality schools, police protection, and social services are all impacted by this count," Ford said. "The State of Illinois is already facing tough decisions surrounding its financial crises, we need every person counted so that we are eligible for the federal funding that our area deserves."

Every ten years, the United States administers a Census to accurately count the population. This information is used as the Federal Government determines where to spend taxdollars and invest in services, road improvements, job creation, and other vital programs. Historically, many communities have lost these resources from low participation. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, during the 2000 census, the city of Chicago's response rate was only 55 percent.

"The 'Count Me In' contest will spur student creativity, and help increase citizen participation. Let's count everybody!" said Representative Ford. "The Census is only used to count the number of people in a given area and to determine where to send federal money, so there is no downside or excuse to not participate."

The winner of the contest will spend a day in our state Capital, Springfield, Illinois. The grand prize includes: Hotel accommodations for one night; photos on the Illinois House of Representatives floor; and a tour of the Governor's Mansion. Students, interested in applying should contact Ford's Full Time Constituent Service Office, located at: 816 S. Oak Park Ave., Suite A, in Oak Park, or contact Ford at (708) 445-3673, or via e-mail at lkf@ilga.gov. The contest deadline is April 19th at 5pm.

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