

News...



FROM THE OFFICE OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE LA SHAWN K. FORD

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Rep. Ford Calls Emergency Town Hall Meeting on Violence in Black Communities

CHICAGO – During the month of August 2012, in which Chicago has seen a 73% increase in homicides compared with August 2011, state Rep. La Shawn K. Ford (D-Chicago) is partnering with a cross-section of community stakeholders to host an Emergency Town Hall Meeting entitled “Violence: Black in America.”

The inmate population in facilities of the Illinois Department of Corrections is over 58% black, and the high proportion of young black males with criminal convictions is well-recognized phenomenon, most of whom return to high crime areas. The unemployment rate for blacks in Illinois is above 17%, compared to 8.2% for whites. “Until the state of Illinois lives up to its constitution and addresses the social and economic problems in Black communities, the cost to Illinois taxpayers for the many programs operated or funded by the state will only increase,” stated Ford.

“If we are to achieve success in building vibrant, healthy communities for everyone in our society, we need to come together to find ways to reduce violence, especially in black-majority communities on the West and South Sides where most of the violence and killings occur,” said Ford. Almost 350 people have been killed in Chicago so far in 2012, compared with 265 during the same period last year. “Even in this difficult time when law enforcement and human service resources from government are being cut, we can come together to channel our anger to bring forth new ideas to reduce violence for those who grow up and live as Black in America,” said Ford. “For example, stronger partnerships can be built with the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. We are looking for ways to improve conditions for poor communities by finding ways to improve education delivery, reduce unemployment, grow and start businesses, and improve the overall delivery of state services, keeping the promise of the constitution of the state of Illinois,” said Ford.

Community partners for Ford’s town hall include: Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office, Illinois African American Family Commission, NAACP, Urban League, Heartland Alliance, Illinois Department of Education, Illinois Department of Corrections, Illinois Department of Employment Security, Illinois Department of Public Health, Chicago State University, Black Star Project, Black Wall Street, TBTNEWS Service, Wiley Resource Center, National Block Club University, and Christ the King Jesuit College Prep School. Individual supporters include Dr. Damon T. Arnold, Dr. Terry Mason, Phil Jackson, Mark Allen, Pastor Robbie Wilkerson, Carl West, Syron Smith and Melissa Williams.

What:	Emergency Town Hall Meeting – “Violence: Black in America”
Who:	State Rep. La Shawn K. Ford, and partners listed above
When:	Tuesday, August 28, 2012 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Where:	Christ the King Jesuit College Prep High School 5088 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago

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Ford/Black in America Town Hall p. 2/con't.

The event is open to the public, and concerned residents will be allowed two minutes each to address the panel. For more information, contact one of Ford's constituent service offices; call the Oak Park office at (708) 445-3673 or the Chicago office at (773) 378-5902, or visit www.lashawnford.com.