



June 27, 2017

Let's End the Lottery Shell Game & Increase School Funding by Hundreds of Millions

I was happy to author legislation that passed the General Assembly on June 23 to ensure the responsible management of the Illinois Common School Fund and provide more funding for local schools. The measure will ensure that tax dollars fund school systems in Illinois, rather than counting on funds from the lottery.

Decades ago, when our state originally implemented the lottery, the purpose was to provide extra revenue for children in our Illinois schools, but for years, lottery money went into the school fund and then out the other end. Because of the financial state that we find ourselves in, the passage of this bill could not have come at a better time. It will plug an education funding leak, bringing hundreds of millions of dollars to schools all across Illinois.

House Bill 213 is a measure that amends the Illinois Lottery to ensure that any money transferred to the Common School Fund from the State Lottery Fund shall be added to, and not in lieu of, any other money due to be transferred to the Common School Fund by law or appropriation. In Fiscal Year 15, \$679 million went to the Common School Fund, meaning schools could win big with these funds helping to make the education system in the state of Illinois a flourishing one.

This is our chance to finally make good on the promise that the lottery was built on. When loopholes cause the educational system to be cheated, we not only cut our children short, but we cut short hope for a better future for communities all over our state. House Bill 213 has now passed both the House and the Senate and now goes to Governor Rauner for his consideration and signature. For the sake of our children and our education system, I urge the governor to sign the bill and make it the law of the land.

Sincerely,

La Shawn K. Ford
State Representative-Eighth District