



October 14, 2021

### **What Ever Happened To Our Emphasis On COVID-19 Testing?**

Earlier in the pandemic, our COVID testing capacity led the news and testing locations were visible and available. Now, testing seems mostly mentioned as an afterthought, sometimes almost as a punishment for the unvaccinated. At the same time, free community based COVID testing has become harder to find.

Yet, public health officials have been clear that even fully vaccinated people can contract and spread COVID-19. Testing and vaccination are not mutually exclusive solutions. In fact, testing could be used as a great opportunity to reinforce the vaccine message for those still hesitant.

Until much more of the world becomes vaccinated, COVID-19 is likely to keep mutating and festering, dragging the pandemic out for the foreseeable future. That's why we must figure out how to live with COVID, even as we work to eliminate it. To accomplish this, we must redouble our efforts to provide frequent, comprehensive testing across all population groups, vaccinated or not. When President Biden visits Chicago this week, I hope that he brings more COVID testing capacity with him.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'L. Ford'.

La Shawn K. Ford  
State Representative-Eighth District