

November 30, 2012

HOUSE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, La Shawn K. Ford has faithfully represented his constituents of the Eighth District as State Representative in the 95th, 96th and 97th General Assemblies; and

WHEREAS, Ford works for improved job opportunities for all and is the Chair of the Small Business Empowerment and Workforce Development Committee, introducing bills that have become law aiming to increase job opportunities for all, and as a part of his agenda to grow jobs and increase economic development has passed and supported General Assembly Members' policy in Chicago, Rockford, the Quad Cities, Peoria, Decatur, Mount Vernon, and Marion to create jobs and support current business owners, holding numerous job fairs, hosting radio and TV shows to promote job opportunities, and sending out daily job leads to thousands of email subscribers; and

WHEREAS, Ford promotes small businesses, working with local, city and state organizations, agencies and Chambers of Commerce to promote economic development for small businesses, introducing bills that became laws including establishing a micro-loan program for ex-offenders who want to start their own businesses, and requiring that not less than 10% of state contracts be awarded to small businesses; and

WHEREAS, Ford works for improved health for all, passing bills to protect seniors in nursing homes, promoting the Affordable Health Care Act by meeting with congressmen in Washington D.C., introducing bills that have become laws expanding testing and reporting of HIV, during the Great Recession when the need for food stamps grew introduced a bill that became law expanding the use of food stamps at farmers markets, also organizing five consecutive annual Health Challenges to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., to improve the health of elementary, junior high and high school students to fight childhood obesity, strongly supporting improved mental health care, sponsoring numerous community blood drives and health fairs, and is a former member of the Board of Directors of Circle Family HealthCare Network, a community health center in Chicago; and

WHEREAS, Ford, as the first person in his family to graduate from college and a former Chicago Public Schools teacher, works for improved education for all, introducing legislation that became law that improves schools' access to technology, holding numerous Town Hall meetings to improve educational opportunities for students at all levels, helping to organize the "College is an Option" event for more than 500 middle school students at Malcolm X College in Chicago for the last two years to expand opportunities for education for all, and is a former member of the Board of Directors of Christ the King Jesuit College Preparatory High School in Chicago; and

WHEREAS, Ford works to secure housing and prevent foreclosures by holding live, telephone and radio town hall meetings, hosting workshops on financing for housing and foreclosure prevention, hosting banking seminars to build community and banking

relationships to eliminate predatory lending in minority communities, chairing Congressman Danny K. Davis' Foreclosure Prevention Committee, and by introducing legislation that became laws, including: providing that a defaulting homeowner be notified by mail that they have the right to remain in their home for 30 days after the entry of the order of possession, requiring the name and contact information of the holder of foreclosed property be recorded and available to the public, making it illegal for condo associations to disapprove a sale of a condo unit if the buyer uses financing guaranteed by the FHA, and increasing the penalties for anyone falsely posing as a landlord and obtaining rent or security deposits; and

WHEREAS, Ford works to increase public safety and decrease violence in our communities and chaired the Firearms Public Awareness Task Force, hosting Town Hall meetings and working with community groups to expand healthy activities as alternatives for young people; and

WHEREAS, Ford, who was born in public housing projects to a single unwed mother and has never known his father, works to improve the quality of community life by being the House's chief sponsor of a bill that became law which establishes the Council on Responsible Fatherhood, introducing the bill that became law which prevents employers from asking for social network account passwords from those they interview or hire, spearheading the gathering of food donations for local food pantries, and hosting the community at screenings of wholesome films; and

WHEREAS, Ford works to support veterans and those in the Armed Services by participating in many veterans events and introducing and passing a House Resolution urging the U.S. Congress to pass legislation to allow free mailing of letters and packages to combat troops; and

WHEREAS, Ford advocates for efficient and effective government and has urged the Governor to appoint a Distressed Counties and Communities Commission to identify how State programs should be changed to improve the delivery of governmental services to persons living in distressed counties and communities and to reduce the cost to State government for those services; and

WHEREAS, Ford works to advance citizenship and increase social justice, authoring and passing a House Resolution with bipartisan sponsorship urging that social justice be the guiding principle in decision-making in the House of Representatives; and

WHEREAS, Ford is currently the Chair of the Small Business Empowerment and Workforce Development Committee, and is a member of the House Committees on Health and Healthcare Disparities, Health Exchanges Subcommittee, Higher Education, Housing, Insurance, Tollway Oversight, Tourism and Conventions, and Veterans' Affairs; and

WHEREAS, Ford currently serves on many community Boards of Directors, including the Austin Chamber of Commerce, the Advisory Board for a Children's Museum in

Austin, Peace Corner, the External Advisory Board for Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children (CLOCC), Fathers Who Care, and also serving as a Trustee for West Suburban Medical Center in Oak Park; and

WHEREAS, Ford has received numerous awards for his legislative work and his work in the community; and

WHEREAS, Ford asks that all afford him the protections of the Constitution that assumes a person to be innocent until proven guilty, because an indictment is an accusation, not a conviction that the law was broken; and

WHEREAS, even though Ford respects that the Federal government feels that they have found a violation of the law, Ford believes he is innocent of the charges; and

WHEREAS, Ford could have taken a plea agreement, but rather than accepting the offer of a plea agreement, he felt his side of the story must be told; and

WHEREAS, Ford respectfully desires to continue his work as a state Representative of the Eighth District because the issues facing his constituents and the state of Illinois are great, which is what led him to run for office to work with the people of the 8th district and the members of this body to help find solutions to the problems facing our state; and

WHEREAS, Ford believes that it is life-experiences like this and his entire life's struggle which inspire him to be a member of this body at this day and time, so he sees no reason to quit when his recent and future experiences will allow him to advocate for and serve the needs of others with even greater understanding and humility; and

WHEREAS, Ford received more than 37,000 votes in the November 6, 2012 General Election, and even though he was elected by the people of the Eighth District and he respects the voters who sent him to the House to fight on their behalf, he also respects the honor of being elected to serve with members of this body; and

WHEREAS, Ford believes he defends the Constitution of the state of Illinois to the best of his ability, remains faithful to the House of Representatives, and respects his oath of office; and

WHEREAS, the charges brought against Ford are strictly of a personal nature and have nothing to do with his work as a state legislator and do not involve an abuse of his role as state Representative and do not involve a violation of his oath as a member of the House of Representatives; and

WHEREAS, Ford respectfully asks members of the House and the people of the Eighth District not to judge him but to examine his work as state Representative over the last six years of service, as well as the working relationships established during the time served together; and

WHEREAS, Ford understands that any member of the House may introduce a similar resolution in the future should circumstances change; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETY-SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that in spite of the charges made against La Shawn K. Ford, the members of the House remain neutral regarding these charges, and the House, as a body, as of the date of adoption of the resolution, allows La Shawn K. Ford to continue in all of his duties as a member of the House of Representatives representing the Eighth District in the 97th General Assembly; and be further

RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be delivered to each member of the House.