

Press Release...



FROM THE OFFICE OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE LA SHAWN K. FORD

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Reps. Ford and Flowers Push HR405 to Help Make “Stop and Frisk” More Transparent

SPRINGFIELD, IL- Rep. La Shawn K Ford, D-Chicago, spoke at the House Judiciary-Criminal Committee Hearing today to urge the General Assembly to pass legislation adopting the recommendations provided in a recent report by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) regarding the law enforcement exercise of “stop and frisk” in Chicago.

“This is in no way a criticism of the Chicago Police Department,” said Ford. “Each of us respect and admire the difficult and dangerous job that we ask the police to do on our behalf. As government leaders and policy makers, we have an obligation to make sure that every agency of government operates in a constitutional and effective manner. We can make the laws, but we cannot legislate morality. These changes must happen, but we need better relationships built on respect.”

HR405 urges the General Assembly to pass legislation to: (1) require police departments to collect data on each frisk, record the frisk, the reason for the frisk (which must be separate from the reasons for the stop), and the results of the search such as whether there was a weapon or other contraband and if so, what type and make the data public; (2) expand and make permanent the Illinois Traffic Stop Statistical Study Act; (3) require police departments to collect data on all stops and make the data public; (4) require police officers to receive regular training on the legal requirements for stop and frisk and how to record them properly; and (5) require that police officers provide civilians with a receipt at the end of pedestrian stops, traffic stops, and consensual encounters stating the officer's name, the time and place of the encounter, and the reason for the encounter.

Under the U.S. Supreme Court decision, Terry v. Ohio, and Illinois law officers are allowed to stop individuals if the officer has a reasonable suspicion that the individual is engaged in criminal activity. If the officer has reasonable suspicion to believe the individual has a weapon, the officer may search the individual. This is commonly referred to as ‘stop and frisk’.

Currently, the Chicago Police Department (CPD) directives require officers to complete a contact information card when the officer conducts a stop that does not result in an arrest. The contact cards allow the officer to record information pertaining to the stop, including information concerning the individual and the reason for the stop. The information on the cards are provided in a database maintained by Public Safety Information Technology.

In March 2015, the ACLU of Illinois released a report on the use of stop and frisk by officers of the Chicago Police Department. The report analyzed a random sample of CPD contact cards from 2012 to 2014 and reviewed the written justifications for the stops provided on the cards. According to the ACLU, this data demonstrated a lack of legally sufficient justifications for some of the stops, disproportionate rates of African-Americans stopped, and inadequate data collection.

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Ford Stop and Frisk, p.2

For more information, contact one of Ford's constituent service offices: 816 S. Oak Park Avenue in Oak Park at [708-445-3673](tel:708-445-3673), 4800 W. Chicago Avenue in Chicago at [773-378-5902](tel:773-378-5902) or in the Stratton Office Building in Springfield at [217-782-5962](tel:217-782-5962) or visit www.lashawnford.com.

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