

# News...

FROM STATE REPRESENTATIVE LA SHAWN K. FORD



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**For More Information:**

RepFord@LaShawnFord.com

773-416-4663

## Ford Encourages Governor to Direct Resources to Stop Drug Overdose Epidemic

**SPRINGFIELD, Ill.** – As Gov. J.B. Pritzker prepares for his annual State of the State Address, state Rep. La Shawn K. Ford, D-Chicago, is encouraging the governor to send a strong message on the need to prioritize funding for efforts aimed at preventing fatal drug overdoses – especially fentanyl and in areas hardest hit, including the South and West Sides of Chicago.

“We’re losing lives every day, and the Black and Latino communities in particular are being devastated by the open drug market,” Ford said. “This tragedy has had immeasurable consequences, leaving families at a loss and ending lives far too young. That’s why it’s on us in Springfield to take real action to support organizations and intervention efforts putting in the hard work to help people in our neighborhoods.”

Ford has reached out to the governor to encourage budget support for harm reduction services – including medication-assisted treatment, counseling, recovery support, safe supplies access and overdose prevention sites. Ford has also engaged local health officials and reviewed data on the significant economic cost of opioid addiction and death. A 2017 study [highlighted](#) by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention projected that the cost of opioid use disorder and fatal opioid overdoses in Illinois was more than \$41 million.

“I know that the governor considers this issue a priority, and I’m confident that he’s going to do the right thing to encourage investment in proven ways to help people,” Ford said. “This is a topic that requires a compassionate approach to help save lives, and we are more than capable of doing just that here in Illinois.”

For more information, please contact [RepFord@LaShawnFord.com](mailto:RepFord@LaShawnFord.com).

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