



Representative Ford teams up with Illinois Fathers for Equality

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SPRINGFIELD - Illinois State Representative La Shawn K. Ford (D) 8th District and Illinois Fathers for Equality a statewide advocacy group are working together to pass an equal shared parenting bill (HB4113). HB4113 addresses the current trend of co-parenting, with both parents being equally involved in the upbringing of their children even after a divorce or separation. Unfortunately, Illinois family courts are behind the times and only give the “standard” once a week, and every other weekend parenting time arrangement in approximately 85% of all cases. This arrangement has been the go-to arrangement for over 30 years but tragically enough statistics and research shows it to be extremely damaging to the children. Children who are raised solely by one parent with minimal to no time with the other parent are at much higher risk of behavioral issues, mental health issues, teen pregnancy, alcohol & substance abuse, academic failure, dropping out of school, and suicide. Research has found that a leading factor to a child’s success after a divorce or separation is having equal access to both parents and building a meaningful relationship with both mother and father.

HB4113 recognizes and addresses’ what social science research tells us is best for our children. HB4113 puts the wants and needs of our children first. It addresses the inequalities occurring in Illinois family courts by starting both parents off as equal before they ever step foot into a courtroom. It holds both parents at the same equal level of importance in the upbringing of their children. HB4113 allows judges to make better educated decisions on what is best for our children but also allows for them to make judicial discretion in situations where one parent may be harmful to the child and/or unable to have equal time.