



Office of the City Clerk

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Legislation Text

File #: R2017-204, Version: 1

Call for hearings i on African American Male Unemployment in Chicago

WHEREAS, The City Council of the City of Chicago is responsible for implementing policies that promote equality and improve the well-being of all of Chicago's residents; and

WHEREAS, There exists significant disparities in employment rates between African American males and other demographic groups in the City of Chicago; and

WHEREAS, The University of Illinois at Chicago's Great Cities Institute reported that 47%- nearly half - of 20- to 24-year-old black men in Chicago, and 44% in Illinois, were out of school and out of work in 2014, compared with 20% of Hispanic men and 10% of Caucasian men in the same age group; and

WHEREAS, This report indicates that the highest concentration of youth unemployment is in neighborhoods on the city's south and west sides, where residents are ninety percent African American; and

WHEREAS, According to the Illinois Department of Employment Security's 2016 Women and Minorities Report, Illinois' average annual unemployment rate was 15.11% for African American men, 6.9% for Hispanic men and 5.4% for Caucasian men; and

WHEREAS, Illinois has the highest black unemployment rate in the country according to a the Economic Policy Institute; and

WHEREAS, African-American men in Illinois have reported the highest unemployment rates among all racial groups and genders (with the exception of 2 years) since the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics began tracking this data in 1981; and

WHEREAS, The issue of African American joblessness is not only an problem in Chicago, but it is a reflection of the widespread systemic economic inequality facing African American males on the state and national level; and

WHEREAS, Recent studies have shown joblessness has measurable effects on an individual's well-being, particularly on the proliferation of criminal behavior; and

WHEREAS, The City of Chicago has many tools to fight African American unemployment as the University of Chicago Crime Lab in conjunction with One Summer Chicago Plus found a 43% decrease in arrest for youths who secured a part-time job with One Summer Chicago Plus; and

WHEREAS, This issue can not be ignored any longer and it is incumbent upon the City of Chicago to promote greater equity, opportunity and social mobility to what has historically been a neglected demographic; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Chicago hereby assembled on this the 29th day of March, 2017, do direct the Committee on Workforce Development and Audit

to hold a hearing(s) on the issue of African American male unemployment with the goal of increasing public awareness of this issue and identifying real solutions to this problem. j

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Pat Dowell Alderman, 3rd Ward