FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MONDAY, JUNE 12, 2017

MEDIA ALERT

ILL. LOSES BILLIONS OF TAX REVENUES DUE TO HIGH NUMBER OF OUT-OF-WORK YOUTH WITHOUT
HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMAS WHO CAN'T FIND JOBS DESPITE NATIONAL LABOR SHORTAGE
Durbin, Kelly, Gainer & O'Connor Highlight
Costs of & Solutions to Youth Unemployment

WHAT: While the U.S. economy is experiencing growing labor shortages and Illinois' unemployment rate is at its lowest in over a decade, joblessness for some sections of the population is nearly 70%. A news conference with U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin, U.S. Rep. Robin Kelly (D-2), Cook County Commissioner Bridget Gainer (D-10) and Chicago Alderman Pat O'Connor (Ward 40) will highlight what can be done to help youth ages 16 to 24. The cost of inaction is high: High school dropouts are more likely to be unemployed, earn less and contribute less in taxes.

Illinois loses an estimated $197,055 in future tax revenue over the working life of each of the 48,108 jobless out-of-school youth who lacks a diploma totaling nearly $9.5 billion. That finding is from a new report by the UIC Great Cities Institute.

Commissioned by the Alternative Schools Network (ASN), The High Costs for Out of School & Jobless Youth in Chicago and Cook County studies the relationship between education and unemployment; education and wages, and taxes paid. It calls for substantive policy solutions to address underlying factors.

Key Report Findings:

- **Chicago & Cook County have the single largest share of these youth:** 44 percent of the 16- to 19-year-olds in Illinois who are out of school and out of work with no high school diploma are from Cook County. For 20- to 24-year-olds, 45 percent live in Cook County.

- **Loss of Income:** Among those with lower levels of educational attainment, unemployment rates are significantly higher and workers earn significantly less than residents with at least a high school diploma—$504 for those without a high school diploma and $1,156 weekly for those with a bachelor's degree.

- **Jobs are concentrated away from the chronically unemployed:** Jobs are concentrated in the Chicago Loop and Northwest Suburbs, yet Community Areas in Chicago with high rates of joblessness have the fewest jobs within walking distance or a 30-minute commute on public transit.

WHO: Elected officials and presenters include:

- U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin
- U.S. Representative Robin Kelly, D-2
- Cook County Commissioner Bridget Gainer, D-10
- Chicago Ald. Patrick O'Connor, Ward 40
- Teresa Córdova, Director, University of Illinois at Chicago Great Cities Institute
- Jack Wuest, Executive Director, Alternative Schools Network
- Keisha Davis-Johnson, Principal, Youth Connection Leadership Academy

WHEN: 10:45 a.m. Monday, June 12, 2017

WHERE: Youth Connection Leadership Academy, 3424 S. State St., Chicago, IL, Third Floor

WHY: Seeking solutions in Washington, Sen. Richard Durbin and U.S. Rep. Robin Kelly have sponsored bills to assist youth ages 16 to 24: Durbin's The Helping to Encourage Real Opportunities (HERO) for At-Risk Youth Act and the Creating Pathways for Youth Employment Act and Kelly's Today's American Dream Act. At the news conference, national and local leaders will discuss efforts underway to address the report's findings.

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