



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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#### 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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