

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 7, 2020

Steven Arroyo, Communications Manager

sarroyo@latinopolicyforum.org



Statement: The Forum Supports COVID-19 Relief Directed Towards Chicago's African-American Community

The Latino Policy Forum is heartbroken by, and fully attentive to, yesterday's grave revelation of statistics indicating that the African-American community has been disproportionately stricken by the COVID-19 coronavirus. According to Dr. Allison Arwady, commissioner for the Chicago Department of Public Health, 72 percent of all COVID-19 fatalities in Chicago thus far have been black. This marks a staggering difference from the African-American community's proportion within the total population of Chicago, which is about 30 percent.

The Forum fully supports all relief efforts directed towards combating this imbalance, including Mayor Lightfoot's proposed community-group task force and objective of activating those with the power to make a difference more broadly, from government officials to health providers. We stand in solidarity with the African-American community, and we stand with Mayor Lightfoot's call for equity in response to these sobering statistics.

Knowing that several hurdles stand in the way of reconciling this imbalance—including citywide disparities in health access, disparities in existing medical conditions such as diabetes and respiratory illness, and in difficulties with collecting accurate demographic data—the Forum is committed to advocating for Illinois' most vulnerable populations, including its African-American community, and to being a reliable source of accurate information.

As Mayor Lightfoot indicated yesterday, education is a critical component to an effective response. Visit the Forum's website for an [updating index of coronavirus resources](#), and visit chicago.gov/coronavirus for facts and information from the Mayor's office and from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention on where to go and what to do if you've been impacted by COVID-19.