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MEDIA ALERT

**YOUTH HEARING AT CHICAGO URBAN LEAGUE CONNECTS VIOLENCE & CRISIS OF YOUTH EMPLOYMENT
U.S. Sen. Durbin, U.S. Rep. Schakowsky & Cook County Board President Preckwinkle Join Release of New Report:
*Industry & Retail Businesses Leave Inner-city While Violence Escalates***

WHAT: The abrupt increase in Chicago’s gun violence, the clear evidence that shootings have a high correlation with joblessness and the research findings that both joblessness and violence are highest in the city’s lowest-income neighborhoods sound a clarion call for city, county, state and federal action on youth employment programs.

A new report commissioned by the Alternative Schools Network and prepared by the University of Illinois at Chicago Great Cities Institute, ***Abandoned in their Neighborhoods: Youth Joblessness Amidst the Flight of Industry and Opportunity***, will be released at a youth hearing, ***More Jobs, Less Violence – Connecting Youth to a Brighter Future***. The report shows a continuation of the trend that puts Chicago at the bottom among major cities in youth joblessness. It also highlights the dramatic migration of jobs by industry, retail and professional and related services from South and West Side neighborhoods to downtown and the already most prosperous areas of the city.

Hearing conveners, the Alternative Schools Network, Chicago Urban League, Westside Health Authority, Chicago Area Project, Black United Fund of Illinois, the National Youth Advocate Program, Youth Connection Charter School, La Casa Norte, Lawrence Hall, Mount Sinai Medical Center, Metropolitan Family Services and Heartland Alliance have organized a panel comprised of six young people and two representatives from businesses that employ youth. They will kick off a discussion at the Chicago Urban League with the agency leaders, elected officials and youth in attendance about what it’s like to be jobless in Chicago, what works for young people and employers and how to advance an agenda of expanding job opportunities and job preparedness programs through youth employment programs.

WHO: Panel will include Moderator, Susan Richardson, Editor & Publisher of the Chicago Reporter, six youth and two business representatives.

Elected officials include:

- U.S. Senator Richard “Dick” Durbin, Assistant Minority Leader
- U.S. Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky, D-9; & District Director for U.S. Congresswoman Cheri Bustos, D-17, Kate Jennings
- Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle
- Andrea Zopp, City of Chicago Deputy Mayor, Chief Neighborhood Development Officer
- IL State Senator Mattie Hunter, D-3
- IL State Reps. Kelly Burke, D-36; Will Davis, D-30; La Shawn Ford, D-8; Elizabeth Hernandez, D-24; Camille Lilly, D-78; Theresa Mah, D-2; Juliana Stratton, D-5 & Arthur Turner, D-9
- City of Chicago Aldermen Pat Dowell, Ward 3; Jason Ervin, Ward 28; Sophia King, Ward 4; Emma Mitts, Ward 37; Harry Osterman, Ward 48; Roderick Sawyer, Ward 6; Michael Scott Jr., Ward 24; Christopher Taliaferro, Ward 29; & Gilbert Villegas, Ward 36
- Cook County Commissioners Richard R. Boykin, D-1, Bridget Gainer, D-10, Jesus “Chuy” Garcia, D-7 & Robert Steele’s Assistant, David Evers
- Executive Director, Justice Advisory Council, Lanetta Haynes Turner

Presenters include:

- Shari Runner, President & CEO, Chicago Urban League
- Jesse Ruiz, Chairman, Chicago Park District
- Sheila Venson, Executive Director, Youth Connection Charter School
- Teresa Cordova, Director, University of Illinois at Chicago Great Cities Institute
- Jack Wuest, Executive Director, Alternative Schools Network

WHEN: 9:00 a.m. – noon, Monday, January 30, 2017

WHERE: Chicago Urban League, 4510 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL

WHY: Chicago experienced an epidemic of gun violence in 2016, with a high correlation between areas where the violence was the worst and the highest unemployment among young people.