

# *Press Release...*

**FROM THE OFFICE OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE MELISSA CONYEARS-ERVIN**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

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## **Conyears-Ervin Calls on DCFS to Re-Evaluate How Cases Are Reviewed**

**CHICAGO** – Following the House Health Care Availability and Accessibility Committee hearing regarding the Semaj Crosby investigation, state Rep. Melissa Conyears-Ervin, D-Chicago, is calling on the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to develop a new system that ensures caseworkers are protecting children living in unsafe homes.

“What happened to Semaj Crosby is a heartbreaking incident that could have been avoided had DCFS had the appropriate measures in place to adequately respond to cases of potential abuse and neglect,” said Conyears-Ervin. “Children throughout Illinois are relying upon this agency to protect them from unsafe environments, but they are not providing each child with the attention that they deserve.”

As a member of the House Health Care Availability and Accessibility Committee, Conyears-Ervin attended the committee hearing on Tuesday that reviewed the death of Semaj Crosby, a 17-month-old child from Joliet. Crosby died in her home in April, despite DCFS workers visiting her home hours before she was found. Her death has raised serious concerns as to how the agency handles cases, especially in light of a report that stated the agency offered gift cards to caseworkers who closed the most cases in a month, incentivizing quick investigations over thorough investigations.

Conyears-Ervin wants to ensure that when caseworkers are called into a home where abuse and neglect have been reported, they are spending the appropriate amount of time in the home. She also wants to ensure that all appropriate steps are being taken by the caseworkers so that the children living in these dangerous environments are protected from further harm.

“When DCFS is called into a home, they have the responsibility to thoroughly investigate the situation,” said Conyears-Ervin. “They must reconsider their current practices to ensure that incidents such as the death of this baby girl do not happen again.”

State Rep. Melissa Conyears-Ervin represents Illinois’ 10th district. Her office can be reached by phone at 773-417-1020, by email at [Rep@ConyearsErvin.com](mailto:Rep@ConyearsErvin.com), or on Facebook at [Facebook.com/repconyearservin](https://www.facebook.com/repconyearservin).

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