

JANUARY 29, 2006

SCHAKOWSKY STATEMENT ON THE RELEASE AND TRANSFER OF FATHER JEAN-JUSTE

CHICAGO, IL - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky, a member of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, today released the following statement after the release of Father Gerard Jean-Juste from a Haitian prison. Father Jean-Juste, a legal, permanent resident of the United States and human rights advocate, was transported from his cell in Haiti to Miami to receive treatment for leukemia and pneumonia. Father Jean-Juste was imprisoned in July based on charges that were later thrown out by a Haitian judge.

Representative Schakowsky worked with a bipartisan coalition of Members of Congress, the State Department, human rights organizations and medical professionals to secure Father Jean-Juste's release.

Schakowsky's full statement is below:

"The release of Father Jean-Juste is a victory for human rights and the rule of law. Father Jean-Juste will now receive treatment in the United States because of the hard work and advocacy of so many Members of Congress, the State Department, human rights groups and medical professionals."

"Father Jean-Juste was jailed because he had the courage to stand up for human rights and to speak out against corruption in Haiti. His release and transfer to the United States is a positive development, but serious problems remain in Haiti and the United States must do more to help the Haitian people."