

SEPTEMBER 2, 2005

SCHAKOWSKY STATEMENT ON THE APPROVAL OF \$10.5 BILLION IN EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR HURRICANE VICTIMS

WASHINGTON, DC - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky, a Chief Deputy Democratic Whip, today released a statement on the approval of a \$10.5 billion emergency supplemental appropriation for the victims of Hurricane Katrina. The emergency supplemental passed the Senate yesterday, and will provide immediate funding for hurricane relief efforts.

The statement from Representative Schakowsky is below:

"The \$10.5 billion dollars that Congress provided in emergency aid today is just a first step in addressing this national crisis."

"Hurricane Katrina has gone from being a natural disaster to a national disaster. Everyone must agree that the situation in New Orleans represents a failure of the federal government to meet its most basic function of effectively and promptly providing safety and security for the American people. The federal government failed to plan for and immediately respond to this crisis."

"The failure stems from a chronic and intentional diversion of resources for which the Bush Administration must accept responsibility. For years, it has been known that a devastating hurricane could hit the Gulf Coast. In 2001, FEMA labeled a hurricane striking New Orleans as one of the three most likely catastrophic disasters facing the United States. The Bush Administration underfunded several critical programs which would have mitigated the scope of this disaster. The Bush Administration has continually proposed budgets which cut funding for the Army Corps of Engineers, disaster mitigation programs, and hurricane protections for Louisiana's coast. In addition, the fact that thousands of National Guard soldiers from Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana are in Iraq has prevented them from being available in sufficient numbers to carry out their primary mission."

"Now is the time for the Bush Administration to show the leadership necessary to save lives, restore security, and initiate recovery efforts on the Gulf Coast. My office has been flooded with calls from constituents across my district offering help and support for the victims. All Americans can help by contributing to the Red Cross and donating food and supplies. Still, it is the primary role of the federal government to aid these victims, who are in many cases impoverished and

are surviving in precarious and often life-threatening conditions."