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SCHAKOWSKY JOINS WAKE UP WAL-MART CAMPAIGN

URGES WAL-MART'S CEO TO RESPECT WOMEN

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Schakowsky (D-IL) today joined with her Democratic colleagues, the Executive Vice President of the AFL-CIO, former Miss America Carolyn Sapp, and Wal-Mart employees to urge Wal-Mart's top executives to put an end to their unfair labor practices against women employees. The "Love Mom, Not Wal-Mart" campaign, the most recent initiative by WakeUpWalmart.com, aims to highlight Wal-Mart's history of discriminatory practices against women. Schakowsky signed an 8 x 8 foot Mother's Day card addressed to Lee Scott, Wal-Mart's CEO, to represent the enormous scope of Wal-Mart's problems.

Wal-Mart, now involved in one of the largest class-action lawsuits ever, is being sued by 1.5 million women for gender discrimination. Although women make up 72% of Wal-Mart's workforce, they account for less than 33% of managers and 15% of store managers. Even within the same job classification, women have earned 5% to 15% less than men in the same role, regardless of performance and tenure.

Schakowsky's statement is below:

"I am proud to be here today to sign this Mother Day card. And I'm proud to say that my children and my grandchildren won't be shopping for gifts for me at Wal-Mart until this global mega-corporation learns to treat its female employees with the respect and dignity that they deserve."

"Wal-Mart heads a lot of lists these days. It is the largest private employer in the world - with 1.4 million employees. It is the largest private employer of women in the U.S. - with 700,000 female workers. It is number one on the Fortune 100 list - with \$10 billion in profits. And it is also at the top of the list of companies that exploit its workers - two-thirds of whom are women."

"They are our mothers, daughters, sisters, cousins, friends and neighbors. They work hard every day and they deserve to be paid fairly, receive full benefits, and have respect on the job. We cannot honor them on Mother's Day and forget them for the other 364 days of the year."

"At Wal-Mart, they get mistreatment, not fair treatment. Behind the smiling faces portrayed in Wal-Mart's multi-million P.R. campaign, there are a lot of unhappy, angry and determined women who are fighting for their rights as part of the "Love Mom, Not Wal-Mart" campaign."

"I am proud to join with them in support of their campaign for justice. We cannot let Wal-Mart profit at the expense of workers, communities and the many small and medium-sized companies who are provide good wages and benefits but are being driven out of business by Wal-Mart's predatory practices. Wal-Mart cannot be allowed to set the standard of how a company treats its workers."

"Wal-Mart pays significantly less than its competitors. Its workers are more likely to live in poverty even when they work full-time. Because their wages are so low, Wal-Mart workers qualify for up to \$2.5 billion in state and federal assistance for Medicaid, housing, school meals and other programs. Of course, not all Wal-Mart employees are suffering. Wal-Mart CEO Lee Scott's annual compensation is 871 times that of the average hourly worker."

"Wal-Mart workers are less likely to have health coverage. Full-time workers have to wait 6 months to qualify for insurance. One-third of Wal-Mart's workers are part-time and have to wait 2 years for health coverage - even then, that insurance doesn't cover their children. High premiums and cost-sharing requirements price health insurance out of the reach of 1 in 3 workers who finally qualify for coverage."

"Wal-Mart workers clock in and out but are frequently required to work off-the-clock overtime - precious time away from their families that is off-the-books and unpaid."

Women workers face additional problems at Wal-Mart - gender discrimination that means they get even lower wages and less chance for advancement. Even if a woman manages to get promoted to a managerial position, she will earn \$5,000 less than her male counterpart."

"Wal-Mart women workers run enormous risks when they speak out because they are tired of receiving unequal pay for equal work or being denied family and medical leave or being forced to work off the clock. Many are fired for demanding respect on the job or for trying to use their legal rights to organize a union."

"That is why we are here today, standing with Wal-Mart workers who are standing up for women workers in America and around the world. I particularly want to thank Sherry Mullins, Christina Bingham and Kimberly Pain, brave and determined women who are fighting for the rights denied to 1.6 million current and former women employees. Today, on Mother's Day, and every day we will work together to demand fair and equal treatment for every worker at Wal-Mart."