

**NOVEMBER 9, 2005**

**SCHAKOWSKY, IL REPS TO HASTERT: STOP BUDGET CUTS THAT WILL HURT OUR CONSTITUENTS**

WASHINGTON, DC - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky was joined today by Representatives Rahm Emanuel, Luis Gutierrez, Lane Evans, and Melissa Bean in sending a letter to Speaker Dennis Hastert today urging him not to bring the house budget reconciliation bill to a vote because of the impact it would have on Illinois residents. The Republican leadership had previously scheduled a Thursday vote on the bill.

The House budget reconciliation bill, as it is currently written, would cut \$53.9 billion from vital programs that help low and middle income families such as Medicaid, student loans, child support, and food stamps, to compensate for \$70 billion dollar tax cuts, the majority of which would go to the wealthiest Americans.

The full text of the letter is below:

Dear Speaker Hastert:

On behalf of Illinois families in our districts, we respectfully urge you not to bring the budget reconciliation bill up for a vote on the House floor. The cuts to Medicaid, student loans, food stamps and other vital programs in this bill would have negative impacts on our constituents.

Illinois has 299,030 college students who depend on student aid. If the \$14 billion in cuts to student loans passes, those students would be forced to pay \$5,800 more for college than they do now. A debt increase of that size will put college out of reach for many of our future leaders.

Illinois would also lose \$161 million in funding for pursuing "deadbeat" parents who skirt their child support responsibilities if the reconciliation cuts pass. That would translate into Illinois children losing \$256 million in child support in the first five years. Over 10 years, they would lose \$782 million.

Many of the 300,000 people in the nation who will lose Food Stamps under this bill live in Illinois. We should not cut critical nutrition assistance to our neediest Illinois families while simultaneously proposing to give away so much to those who have no problem keeping food on their tables.

As you surely know, in Illinois there are 1,100,574 children, 279,046 elderly, 300,341 people

who are blind or disabled, and 396,185 low-income adults who rely on Medicaid for health coverage they otherwise would not have. Many of the 2,076,146 Medicaid recipients cannot afford any increases in their share of costs and would be forced to forego needed medical care if the proposed \$10 billion in Medicaid cuts in the reconciliation package are passed.

Above are just a few examples of those in our great state who would be hurt by reconciliation if it is passed in its current form. Again, we respectfully urge you to put working households, children, and struggling families first. We also would like to work with you to pass a better budget that improves opportunities for Illinoisan families. Thank you for your consideration.