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**SCHAKOWSKY, DAVIS, MCNARY, STUDENTS EXPOSE REPUBLICAN HALLOWEEN TRICKS**

**BUDGET CUTS PENDING BEFORE CONGRESS WOULD TAKE BILLIONS FROM MEDICAID, STUDENT LOANS, FOSTER CARE**

**CHICAGO, IL -- U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky today joined U.S. Representative Danny Davis, U.S. Action President William McNary, and students from across Chicago to hold a press conference opposing the \$35 - \$50 billion budget cuts being sought by the Republican leadership in the House of Representatives. The Republican's budget reconciliation proposal, which could reach the floor of the House next week, would cut billions of dollars from vital programs like Medicaid, child support, foster care, food stamps, and student loans. At the same time, the Republicans are promoting \$70 billion in new tax cuts, over 50% of which would go to millionaires.**

**U.S. Representative Schakowsky's full statement is below:**

**This Halloween, the Republican leadership in Congress is playing tricks on the poor and middle class families, to make way for more treats for the rich.**

**The Republican leadership has proposed cutting \$35 to \$50 billion from vital programs such as Medicaid, child support, student loans, food stamps, and foster care. Even though they already face skyrocketing health care costs, energy prices and college tuition rates, most Americans should plan on receiving fewer protections and services in return for the taxes they pay the government this year.**

**It is not because those services are too expensive; it is because President Bush and his cronies will do anything to make sure their candy bag is full at the end of the day.**

**They have a scary agenda:**

**They want to cut Medicaid by at least \$9.5 billion, hurting seniors and people with**

disabilities, and making poor children and pregnant women pay premiums for the first time.

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They want to cut food stamps by \$844 million over 5 years. This translates into almost 300,000 people losing food stamps and going hungry.

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They want to cut \$5 billion from child support enforcement, reducing the resources available to single parents and letting deadbeat parents off the hook.

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They have cut spending on foster care and adoption assistance by \$577 million. These programs help care for abused and neglected children and help to find adoptive homes when reunifying kids with their biological parents is impossible.

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The Republicans reduced supplemental security income by \$732 million -a move that yanks the rug out from under our most impoverished and vulnerable elderly, the disabled and children.

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And, for the students in the room, our nation's future leaders, the Republicans want to cut \$15 billion from federal student aid programs - the largest raid on student aid ever.

These are the tricks awaiting most Americans this Halloween. But the treats for the rich will be many. President Bush and the Republican leadership are pushing to make their tax cuts for millionaires permanent, pickpocketing the poor and middle class and driving up the deficit. They are pushing \$50 billion in spending cuts that will hurt average Americans to pay for \$70 billion in new tax cuts for the rich. Over 50% of those billions of dollars will go to millionaires.

The fallout will be felt by students here at Loyola, throughout Illinois and across the country. As a result of the Republican raid on student aid, the typical student borrower-already saddled with \$17,500 in debt-could be forced to pay up to an additional \$5,800 for his or her college loans. At Loyola, 75% of this year's freshman class

receives financial aid.

**First the Republicans left our children with a record federal deficit. Now they're leaving students with massive debts of their own and placing a quality college education at a price that is out of reach for many more American students.**

**The Republicans have dressed these budget cuts up as fiscally responsible efforts to offset the costs of hurricane relief and aid for Katrina victims. Let me be clear, these cuts to programs the majority of Americans rely upon are for one purpose and one purpose only: To make way for the President's tax cuts for millionaires. The President never asked Congress to offset the costs of rebuilding Baghdad. But now he is saying that in order to rebuild Biloxi, everyone but his rich friends have to sacrifice. Instead of a shared national burden, he wants Congress to take assistance from those who need it most to give it to those who need it least.**

**Budgets are not just about numbers. What we choose to pay for and what we choose to cut are moral choices about how to run our country, reflections of the values of our society, and an honest telling about who and what matters to us. The Republicans have a choice about how to spend the federal budget, and they have chosen to reward millionaires at the expense of low and middle income families, seniors, people with disabilities, and kids. And they have stooped so low that they are using the Katrina tragedy, another example of the Republican's failed leadership, as an excuse to do it.**

**Democrats are united against these cuts. We will join with working Americans, the elderly, and students to fight these cuts. The Republicans have said these cuts will offset the costs of Katrina - but we know the real story. We have an opportunity to win this battle.**

**We know to watch out for tricks this Halloween. Democrats and average Americans are mobilizing to make sure the fat cats don't get all the treats. If the Republicans bring these cuts to the House Floor for a vote, they'll have to pass them alone. Thanks for joining us today, and thanks for joining in the fight.**