

OCTOBER 28, 2005

SCHAKOWSKY HONORS THE LIFE OF ROSA PARKS

WASHINGTON, DC - "Today we honor the life and legacy of Rosa Parks. On October 24, Rosa Parks died in Detroit at the age of 92. I join all of my colleagues and on behalf of my constituents express sorrow on the death of Rosa Parks, the woman many consider the mother of the civil rights movement.

□

Rosa Parks' refusal to give up her seat on a bus to a white person on December 1, 1955, touched off the 381 day Montgomery bus boycott, and led to the repeal of so-called Jim Crow laws of segregation in the South. It is the courage, dignity, and determination that Ms. Parks exemplified on that day that allows most historians to credit her with beginning the modern day civil rights movement. The events that began on that bus captivated the nation and transformed a 26-year-old preacher, Martin Luther King Jr. into a major civil rights leader. "Mrs. Parks' arrest was the precipitating factor rather than the cause of the protest," King wrote in his 1958 book, "Stride Toward Freedom." "The cause lay deep in the record of similar injustices."

□

Rosa Parks didn't set out to be a hero. But by taking a stand, she became the catalyst for a profound change in American society, and the walls of segregation came tumbling down. Rosa Parks is a national treasure and an inspiration for the ongoing fight for social equality. □ She reminds us that the pursuit for justice is an obligation for all instead of a choice for some. □ She was one small woman who had a big impact and empowered individuals. Her life's work is a shining light in our nation's history. □

□

Rosa Parks said, "I'd like people to say I'm a person who always wanted to be free and wanted it not only for myself; freedom is for all human beings."

□

**This year marks the 50th Anniversary of Rosa Parks' courageous and defiant act of civil disobedience. As we honor her life and legacy, I ask the Congress and the great people of this nation to work with the same courage, dignity, and determination exemplified by Rosa Parks to address and change modern day inequalities and injustices. I know that this Congress and the people of this nation can work to further the ideals of Rosa Parks and the Civil Rights Movement."**