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SCHAKOWSKY: REPUBLICANS SHORTCHANGE FUNDING FOR VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT BY \$55 MILLION

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today expressed disappointment that House Republicans have shortchanged funding for the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) by \$55 million. Schakowsky said that VAWA funding in the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2005 is "inadequate."

"Funding for VAWA programs in the Department of Justice, programs which serve to protect older and disabled women from violence, to provide transitional housing for women fleeing abusive partners, to protect students on campus from sexual assault, to reduce stalking, remains \$55 million short of full funding. This is simply unacceptable," Schakowsky said.

In addition to continuing to push for full funding of VAWA, Schakowsky has authored legislation to expand protection for battered immigrant women and to provide transitional housing for victims of domestic abuse.

Below is Schakowsky's statement:

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my disappointment with the wholly inadequate level of funding in the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2005 for grants to combat violence against women. Women in this country are in the midst of a crisis, continuing to be terrorized by sexual assault, domestic violence, and stalking, and the situation is not getting much better. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, at least one out of every six women and girls in the United States will have been beaten or sexually abused in her lifetime.

So what is the Republican leadership's response? According to this bill, it is to cut funding for grants to states to combat violence against women. This bill closely follows the President's request and cuts VAWA funding by 1% from last year's levels down to \$383.5 million. Funding for Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) programs in the Department of Justice, programs which serve to protect older and disabled women from

violence, to provide transitional housing for women fleeing abusive partners, to protect students on campus from sexual assault, to reduce stalking, remains \$55 million short of full funding. This is simply unacceptable.

We have the money in this country to help every woman who is raped, to provide counseling and services to every family trying to overcome domestic violence, to train police officers to help victims of stalking - yet the President's budget chooses not to do this. Instead, the Republican majority chooses to spend more of our money on tax cuts for the wealthy.

I go back to my district and I see women who have worked so hard to survive domestic abuse and sexual assault. I meet families who have lost a mother or a sister to domestic violence. When they ask me - what is my government doing to help me? what is my government doing to make sure this doesn't happen to another woman? - I will have to tell them that the government is not doing nearly enough. The Republican leadership is cutting funding for programs to prevent violence against women. That is a disgrace.