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SCHAKOWSKY:□

PRESIDENT BUSH DISPLAYS INEPT LEADERSHIP BY PUBLICLY SUPPORTING DEFENSE SECRETARY RUMSFELD

CHICAGO, IL - Even as the prison abuse scandal in Iraq widens, U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), a Chief Deputy Whip, today called President Bush's support for Defense Secretary Rumsfeld "disturbing" and a "public display of the President's inept leadership."□

"It is disturbing that President Bush would continue to support Donald Rumsfeld, a Defense Secretary whose leadership is being questioned by those in the military, and a man who is a symbol of America's failed policy in Iraq.□ Donald Rumsfeld must go," Schakowsky said.□□

She added, "What does Donald Rumsfeld have to do in order to be fired by President Bush?□ He remains the Secretary of Defense even after he was wrong about how many troops we needed in Iraq.□ He is still at the Pentagon even though he sent our soldiers into battle without enough up-armored Humvees and body armor.□ And Donald Rumsfeld is in charge of our military even after trying to minimize the gravity of the abuse and torture of Iraqi prisoners."

"As Commander-in-Chief, it is President Bush's duty to dishonorably discharge Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld from his Cabinet.□□ Unfortunately, by publicly supporting Donald Rumsfeld, President Bush is displaying his inept leadership to the American people and the rest of the world," Schakowsky concluded.

In addition to calling on President Bush to fire Donald Rumsfeld, Schakowsky had urged the President last week to suspend all contracts with private military firms involved in the supervision, security or interrogation of Iraqi prisoners and to provide Congress copies of such contracts. A report by General Tugaba has implicated some contractors in the abuse of Iraqi prisoners.□

"There are at least 20,000 highly-paid private military contractors operating in Iraq, and the recent events underscore the fact that contractors operate with little or no

accountability to Congress or the American people," Schakowsky said.