

MARCH 25, 2004

**SCHAKOWSKY SAYS FOLLOWING BUDGET VOTE:
REPUBLICANS VALUE TAX CUTS FOR THE RICH OVER MEETING THE NEEDS OF MOST AMERICANS**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today blasted the Republican FY'05 budget and called it indefensible. Schakowsky added that Republicans "value tax cuts for the wealthy over meeting the needs of most Americans." Schakowsky, who is a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, issued the following statement:

"The House Republican budget is indefensible. As they always do, Republicans followed the lead of President Bush and passed a budget that goes after the poor, the homeless, and the elderly. Republicans value more tax cuts for the rich over meeting the needs of senior citizens, working families, the unemployed and most Americans. Republicans slash Medicaid and Section 8 vouchers so they can pay for missile defense, subsidies to Halliburton and tax cuts for the wealthy."

"The Republican budget cuts and underfunds programs that have been proven to strengthen our country and provide opportunities for the future. The so-called education President's own No Child Left Behind is underfunded by \$8.8 billion. While college costs have skyrocketed, the GOP budget keeps the Pell Grant maximum at the same level it was three years ago. There is no money for the Family Opportunity Act which provides health insurance for disabled children. It tells my committee, Energy and Commerce, to make \$2.2 billion in Medicaid cuts over the next five years, jeopardizing health and long term care for the 52 million Americans."

"Section 8, low-income heating assistance or LIHEAP, child care assistance - programs that help people pay the bills and keep roofs over their head in tough times like these - are cut by \$3.7 billion. We could see 250,000 people lose affordable housing this year under the GOP budget. Veterans' health care is underfunded again, this time by \$1.3 billion below what the Republican Chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee recommended. Over the next five years, the Republican budget will cut these and other domestic programs by \$36.9 billion. At a time when so many families are worried about jobs, health care, education, this budget puts their future on the chopping block."

"Parents cannot afford to send their children to college. Seniors cannot afford their housing, heating bills or medicine. Veterans have to wait for months to see a physician at the VA. Teachers still have to buy their own school supplies. Democrats offered a clear alternative to the destructive plan Republicans pushed through Congress. We will continue to fight for a fair budget that will fund America's true priorities."