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**SCHAKOWSKY FIGHTS GOP EFFORTS  
TO TAKE AWAY A WOMAN'S  
RIGHT TO CHOOSE**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - On the House floor today, U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) said that Congress can protect pregnant women *"without taking away a woman's Constitutionally-protected right to choose."*

□ Below is Schakowsky's full statement from today's debate on H.R. 1997, the Unborn Victims of Violence Act, which was approved by the House:

"If we want to protect pregnant women than we have to do so without taking away a woman's Constitutionally-protected right to choose.□ H.R. 1997 is a thinly-veiled effort to give special status to an embryo and fetus.

"Proponents of H.R. 1997 will say this bill is needed to protect pregnant women from violence. But the truth is that this bill does not even address crimes committed against women - it only addresses the new crime created in this bill, which is a crime against a zygote, embryo, and fetus.□

"Furthermore, this bill would not even apply to the tragic Laci Peterson case.□ As we understand the facts of that case - and as is true in the vast majority of domestic violence cases - those crimes are covered by state law, not federal law.□ Yet, H.R. 1997 only touches on few and rare instances when pregnant women could be harmed by someone committing a federal crime.

"The undisputed aim of this bill is to move forward a calculated anti-choice agenda in which embryos and fetuses are codified into law as humans, with all the legal rights and protections afforded people in our society.□ This would bring us one step closer to overturning Roe v Wade and taking away a woman's Constitutional right to choose.

"Instead, if we truly care about protecting pregnant women from violence and creating stiffer penalties for those who harm pregnant women, we should pass the substitute to this bill known as the Motherhood Protection Act. This substitute recognizes that the pregnant woman is the victim when she is assaulted.□ Instead of making the fetus

**distinct and separate from the woman - and those of us who have been pregnant know that the child we are carrying is part of who we are - the substitute classifies the assault against her and the assault on her pregnancy as two crimes.□**

**"Unlike H.R. 1997, the substitute gets to the heart of the matter - protecting pregnant women from violence. I urge my colleagues to vote no on H.R. 1997 and yes on the substitute amendment."**