

MAY 29, 2003

SCHAKOWSKY TO PRESIDENT BUSH AND SPEAKER HASTERT: ASSAULT WEAPONS BAN MUST BE MAINTAINED AND STRENGTHENED

SEVEN MEMBERS OF CONGRESS FROM ILLINOIS SIGN ON TO SCHAKOWSKY'S LETTERS TO THE PRESIDENT AND TO THE SPEAKER URGING SUPPORT FOR BAN

CHICAGO, IL - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) called on President Bush to stand by his promise to support the continued ban on assault weapons and not to allow it to expire next year. The assault weapons ban is supported by every major law enforcement agency in the country.

In a letter to the President organized by Schakowsky and signed by seven members of the Illinois Congressional Delegation, the members wrote, "*the current federal assault weapons ban, passed into law in 1994, will expire in September 2004, and its reauthorization is uncertain. We believe it is critically important to the safety of all Americans that we not only renew this ban on deadly assault weapons but that we also strengthen it.*"

They added, "*We ask you to show your support by urging Congressional leadership to schedule H.R. 2038, the Assault Weapons Ban and Law Enforcement Protection Act, for a vote on the House floor during this Congressional session.*"

"*We believe it is critically important to the safety of all Americans that we not only renew this ban on deadly assault weapons but that we also strengthen it. H.R. 2038 would do just that. It contains critical language that would reinstate the existing ban, as well as close gaping loopholes that allow assault gun makers to skirt the law by producing and selling 'modified' assault weapons,*" they continued.

Schakowsky and her colleagues also sent a letter to Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-IL) urging him to schedule a vote on H.R. 2038. "*Our constituents expect us to protect their interests, and that includes ensuring that Congress has the opportunity to vote on whether to renew this ban or not. We believe that it is crucial to vote on H.R. 2038 and to give this piece of homeland security legislation its day on the House floor,*" the members wrote.

In addition to Schakowsky, the following Democratic House members from Illinois signed the letters to President Bush and to Speaker Hastert: Lane Evans, Bill Lipinski, Rahm Emanuel, Danny Davis, Luis Gutierrez, Bobby Rush and Jesse Jackson, Jr.