

APRIL 10, 2003

**SCHAKOWSKY/LEAHY TRANSITIONAL HOUSING LEGISLATION APPROVED BY
CONGRESS**

**BILL WOULD HELP WOMEN AND CHILDREN
FLEE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Legislation introduced by U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) and Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT) to help women and children flee domestic violence was approved today by Congress as part of the AMBER Alert conference report. The President is expected to sign the bill.

The legislation, which authorizes \$30 million for each fiscal year 2004 through 2008, would establish a grant program for transitional housing assistance for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Transitional housing resources and services provide a continuum between emergency shelter provisions and independent living.

"Transitional housing is often the link between emergency housing and a victim's ability to become self-sufficient. The legislation opens the doors to new opportunities for survivors because, in addition to a roof and a bed, transitional housing programs also offer supportive services, such as counseling, job training, access to education, and child care," Schakowsky said.

"These tools are critical to allowing women to get back on their feet and to be able to support their children in a home that is free from violence," Schakowsky added.

Schakowsky first introduced transitional housing legislation in 1999. The House of Representatives has repeatedly authorized transitional housing assistance for victims of abuse - in 2000 as part of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act and in 2002 and 2003 as part of the Keeping Families and Children Safe Act.