

**MARCH 26, 2003**

**SCHAKOWSKY APPLAUDS PASSAGE OF BILL AUTHORIZING TRANSITIONAL HOUSING FUNDS FOR WOMEN FLEEING DOMESTIC ABUSE**

**WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), a national leader to end domestic abuse, applauded the passage of legislation which authorizes \$25 million for each of the next four years for transitional housing funds to help women fleeing domestic violence. Below is Schakowsky's Congressional Record Statement in support of H.R. 14, the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act:**

**IN SUPPORT OF TRANSITIONAL HOUSING FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

**Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 14, the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act. There are provisions in this bill that will provide much needed resources for child abuse prevention, assistance for victims of child abuse and family violence, and adoption opportunities. In particular, I am very pleased that this bill authorizes \$25 million for each of the fiscal years 2004 through 2008 for transitional housing for victims of domestic violence. It is my sincere hope that this bill will pass and the funding for transitional housing will be appropriated as soon as possible.**

**Transitional housing has been shown to prevent domestic violence and mitigate its effects. Unfortunately, many women who leave their abusers lack adequate resources and, with a shortage of emergency shelter and transitional housing options, are forced to choose between abuse at home or life on the streets. Yet, despite the fact that 50% of homeless women and children are fleeing domestic violence, there is currently no federal funding for transitional housing specifically for those victims.**

**It is critical that transitional housing be available to all those fleeing domestic abuse if we want to see an end to this violence. Transitional housing resources and services provide a continuum between emergency shelter provisions and independent living. A stable, sustainable home base for women and their children in transitional housing allows women the opportunities to learn new job skills, participate in educational programs, work full-time jobs, and search for adequate child care in order to gain self-sufficiency. Without such resources, many women eventually return to situations where they are abused and even killed.**

**In addition to supporting the funding for transitional housing as provided in H.R. 14, I am currently preparing to reintroduce the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Victims Housing Act. This bill would authorize \$50 million a year to the Violence Against Women Office to award grants to provide transitional housing to women and their**

children escaping violence. I urge my colleagues to support this measure.

However, supporting measures such as H.R. 14 and the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Victims Housing Act are only the first step in making sure that Congress works to end the cycle of violence against women. It is crucial that Congress take the next step of actually making the money available. The House has authorized funding for transitional housing for domestic violence victims multiple times, yet has never appropriated a single dollar for this purpose. Therefore, I strongly urge my colleagues to follow through on their support for transitional housing and appropriate money for this purpose in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2004 budget.

Victims of domestic violence deserve nothing less than our full commitment to providing adequate resources that will help them rid their lives of violence forever and rebuild healthy lives for themselves and their children. I urge my colleagues to vote YES on H.R. 14.