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**SCHAKOWSKY APPLAUDS PASSAGE
OF BILL THAT COULD HELP ILLINOIS
FIGHT WEST NILE VIRUS**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today applauded passage of legislation that could provide Illinois with federal dollars to help prevent outbreaks of the West Nile Virus.

"West Nile claimed numerous lives and caused a great deal of suffering in states across the country, especially Illinois. Illinois experienced the highest number of human cases of West Nile in the country, over 800 cases and at least 55 deaths. Skokie and Evanston, cities in the heart of my district, have been severely impacted as compared with the rest of the state," Schakowsky said.

Under H.R. 342, the Mosquito Abatement for Safety and Health Act, Illinois and other states could receive federal grants to assist with programs to prevent and control mosquito-borne diseases. The grant program would be administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. However, in order for states to begin receiving grants under H.R. 342, Congress must first appropriate funding.

The bill also directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services to provide training and technical assistance to states and localities for the planning, development, and operation of mosquito control programs.

"We need to expand and improve federal efforts to assist states and localities in battling West Nile and H.R. 342 is a good step toward meeting that goal," Schakowsky said.

The legislation was approved by the House Energy and Commerce Committee, on which Schakowsky serves, on January 29, 2003. The full House approved the bill by a vote of 416 -9.