

DECEMBER 11, 2002

SCHAKOWSKY CALLS ON TRENT LOTT TO STEP DOWN AS LEADER OF THE SENATE FOLLOWING RACIST COMMENTS

CALLS ON ILLINOIS REPUBLICAN SENATOR FITZGERALD TO OPPOSE LOTT AS MAJORITY LEADER

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today issued the following statement calling on Trent Lott to step down as incoming Majority Leader of the United States Senate. Last week, Lott praised Strom Thurmond's segregationist presidential bid in 1948.

"The American people would be ill-served having Trent Lott as the next Majority Leader of the United States Senate. Trent Lott's comments were reprehensible and inexcusable and his words echo a pattern of racist remarks that offend people in Illinois and across America. His apology is not accepted. I join those across the nation who have called on Trent Lott to step down as the next Majority Leader of the Senate and urge President Bush to join that effort," Schakowsky said.

"Illinois Republican Senator Peter Fitzgerald should put aside his allegiance to his Party and reject racism by calling on Trent Lott to step down as Majority Leader. It is bad enough that in the 21st Century there is not a single African American in the United States Senate, but it is intolerable to have as its leader someone who makes these kinds of racist remarks," she added.

Schakowsky concluded, "Racism, in any shape or form, has no place in our nation, especially in the United States Senate. We must stand firm against any efforts to turn back the clock on hard fought civil rights victories."

Schakowsky also sent a letter urging Senator Peter Fitzgerald to call for the resignation of Senator Lott as incoming Majority Leader. Below is a copy of Congresswoman Schakowsky's letter to Senator Fitzgerald.

DECEMBER 11, 2002*Dear Senator Fitzgerald:*

I am writing to you today to express my deep concern over recent racist remarks made by Senator Trent Lott. I urge you in the strongest of terms to join those of us who are calling for Senator Lott to step down from the position of Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate during the upcoming 108th Congress.

Senator Lott's words echo a clear pattern of racist remarks that are offensive to people in Illinois and across America. It is unfortunate that in the 21st Century there is not a single African American in the U.S. Senate, but intolerable to have as its leader someone

who makes racist remarks.[] []

Again, I urge you to immediately speak out on this subject and call for Senator Lott to resign his position as Senate Majority Leader. It is my hope that you will put American values and common decency above politics and condemn Senator Lott's reprehensible behavior.[] Thank you for your consideration.[] I look forward to your timely response.

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Sincerely,

*Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress*