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**SCHAKOWSKY APPLAUDS PASSAGE OF LANDMARK ELECTION REFORM
LEGISLATION**

LEGISLATION INCLUDES PROVISIONAL VOTING SIMILAR TO SCHAKOWSKY'S BILL

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Democratic Caucus Special Committee on Election Reform Vice Chair Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) hailed the passage of landmark election reform legislation. The Help America Vote Act, which includes provisional voting language similar to Schakowsky's bill, establishes new minimum standards to reform the nation's election system and provides states with \$3.8 billion to implement them. The bill also:

- gives voters the opportunity to check for and correct ballot errors (second chance voting);
- provides at least one voting machine per precinct that allows disabled voters to vote privately and independently; and
- implement computerized statewide voter registration databases to ensure accurate voter lists.

The bill, which was passed by House and the Senate, is on its way to the White House for the President's signature. Below is Schakowsky's statement during debate on the House floor:

As Vice Chair of the Democratic Caucus Special Committee on Election Reform, I traveled the nation with leaders on this issue, listening and learning from voters in Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Jacksonville and other cities. What we heard from elderly and young voters, people of color, and persons with disabilities was clear: Without national minimum election standards and a commitment of federal dollars, voters will continue to be disenfranchised and history is doomed to repeat itself.

The Help America Vote Act is not perfect, but it will bring us closer to ensuring that every vote is counted and that no voter is disenfranchised.

I am particularly pleased that this legislation also includes a crucial proposal similar to legislation I introduced last year, the Provisional Voting Rights Act of 2001, H.R. 1004. Under provisional voting, registered voters can feel confident that if their name does not appear on the registration list, they will be permitted to vote. They will not have to go to a police station or leave the polling place in order to get their provisional ballot. Any meaningful election reform proposal must include this measure and the Help America Vote Act does. Provisional voting is a guarantee that voters will not be penalized

through no fault of their own.

The Help America Act ensures that voters can correct their errors on the ballot; improves voting accessibility to the 46 million voting-aged Americans with disabilities; and helps ensure accurate computerized statewide voter registration list; provides \$3.8 billion in critical funding so that states and localities like Cook County can implement election reform guidelines.

What the 2000 election has taught us is that many problems exist and that without serious federal legislative steps, we are destined for another Florida fiasco and an election decided by the Judicial Branch and not the electorate.□

During the 2000 election, six million votes were not counted and voters were turned away at the polls, harassed, or intimidated.□ The Help America Vote Act will instill confidence in our election system, increase voter participation and most importantly reform our election so that in the future that voters are never again denied their constitutional rights.