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SCHAKOWSKY CALLS ESTABLISHMENT OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN OFFICE A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today called the establishment of violence against women office in the Department of Justice as a step in the right direction.□□

"Violence against women is one of the most serious problems in this country today, and we need to have strong laws, adequate resources, and effective enforcement efforts in order to combat it.□ I believe the establishment of this office is a step in that direction," Schakowsky said.

She added, "I hope the President will make a thoughtful decision and use this opportunity to appoint a director who is a true advocate for women's safety, not just a figurehead."

Schakowsky is the author of H.R. 3752, the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Victims Housing Act, which would authorize \$50 million for FY 2003 for such a program.□ The bipartisan legislation currently has 112 cosponsors.

"If we are serious about helping women who have been victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, it is critical that we provide them with the resources they need to escape the violence.□ I urge my colleagues to appropriate funds to the Department of Housing and Urban Development for transitional housing programs for women and their children who have been victims of such violence," Schakowsky said.

She added, "It is crucial to provide a stable, sustainable home base for women who have left situations of domestic violence and are learning new job skills, participating in educational programs, working full-time jobs, or searching for adequate child care in order to gain self-sufficiency.□ Transitional housing resources and services provide a continuum of care between emergency shelter and independent living."

"It is time that we make ending violence against women a national priority," Schakowsky concluded.