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SCHAKOWSKY: "IMMIGRANTS DESERVE SOMEONE ON THE INSIDE TO BE ON THEIR SIDE"

CALLS FOR CREATION OF AN IMMIGRATION OMBUDSMAN

CHICAGO, IL - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) issued the following statement in support of the creation of a Citizenship and Immigration Services Ombudsman Office. Schakowsky was successful in passing an amendment to the Government Reform Committee's bill on homeland security to create an Ombudsman office.

Below is Schakowsky's statement:

"On behalf of the thousands of immigrants and their families in my district, I want to thank Senator Durbin for his leadership and commitment to the creation of an Ombudsman office to assist individuals and employers in resolving problems with citizenship and immigration services. I also want to recognize the Independent Monitoring Board's partner agencies and endorsing organizations for their tireless advocacy on behalf of the immigrant community."

"With your help, we are now a step closer to reaching our goal. Last week, the House Government Reform Committee adopted my amendment to create an Ombudsman office where immigrants and employers can turn for help with the immigration process. It was included in the homeland security bill that is moving its way through the legislative process. I will need your voices and advocacy to ensure that the final product includes this critical and necessary provision."

"In my own district, approximately 80% of constituent cases have to do with problems with the INS. There needs to be a place where people can go to file complaints if all other methods have failed them. An Ombudsman office is such a place."

"There is a growing use of Ombudsmen in Federal Agencies. For example, the Environmental Protection Agency has an Ombudsman to interact with small businesses to help them comply with new government regulations; and the Internal Revenue Service has an Ombudsman, or Taxpayer Advocate, to help taxpayers redress grievances. Immigrants deserve someone on the inside to be on their side."

"I look forward to working with Senator Durbin, the Illinois delegation, and our tireless advocates to ensure that we can deliver to our immigrants this important victory."