

JULY 10, 2002

**PROVISIONS CHAMPIONED BY SCHAKOWSKY INCLUDED IN MAJOR HOUSING BILL
COMMITTEE ALSO ADOPTS HOUSING TRUST FUND AMENDMENT**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today applauded the approval of a comprehensive bill by the Financial Services Committee to help meet some of the nation's critical housing needs. The Housing Affordability Act of 2002, H.R. 3995, would authorize the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to provide matching grants to localities' and states' housing trust funds. The City of Chicago has a \$6.5 million trust fund and Illinois has \$20 million trust fund. The bill also reauthorizes the Housing Opportunity for People with AIDS (HOPWA) through 2004 and homeless assistance programs. In addition, it increases FHA mortgage limits.

H.R. 3995 contained three Schakowsky-sponsored provision:

- Goal of ending homelessness within ten years.

- Expansion of Section 8 enhanced voucher program.

- Grant program to meet transitional housing needs of women fleeing domestic abuse.

The first Schakowsky amendment establishes a goal of ending homelessness within ten years. As many as 3 million people experience homelessness each year. Schakowsky is working with the National Alliance to End Homelessness, Lakefront SRO and many other supportive housing organizations to reach that crucial goal.

The Committee also voted to adopt Schakowsky's second amendment to help Section 8 tenants who are displaced when their building converts to a cooperative or a condominium or to nonresidential use. Under the Schakowsky amendment, displaced tenants would receive an "enhanced voucher" that is up to 150% of fair market rent. By increasing the amount of the rent voucher, tenants would improve their ability to find alternate housing in their current neighborhood.

"Condo conversions are forcing many long-term community residents into an often futile hunt for affordable housing in the same neighborhood. This measure will provide some relief," Schakowsky said.

Finally, H.R. 3995 included another Schakowsky amendment that would require HUD to create a new grant program through 2007 so local community organizations can help meet the transitional housing needs of women fleeing domestic violence. Fifty percent of all homeless women and children are fleeing domestic violence, yet emergency shelters are unable to meet 32 percent of the requests for shelter by homeless families, and 88 percent of cities, including Chicago, have to turn away homeless families because of inadequate resources.

"Our mission is to end violence against women. As we reach for that goal, however, we must expand the safety network so that women and children can escape abuse and move on with their lives. We are sparing no expense to attack terror around the world, we must also use every resource to attack the terror of domestic violence right here at home," said Schakowsky, who recently met with HUD Secretary Mel Martinez to urge his support for this proposal.

Schakowsky is the author of similar stand-alone bipartisan legislation. It is cosponsored by more than 100 members of Congress and would authorize \$50 million for transitional housing resources and services that provide a continuum between emergency shelter and independent living.