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**SCHAKOWSKY EXAMINES IMPACT NEW HOMELAND SECURITY DEPARTMENT MAY HAVE ON CRITICAL, NON-SECURITY FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNMENT AGENCIES**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today joined members of the Government Reform Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy, and Human Resources to examine the impact the creation of a new Department of Homeland Security may have on critical, non security functions of government agencies. Below is Schakowsky's full committee statement.

*Thank you Mr. Chairman for convening this hearing today to examine the possible impact the creation of a new Department of Homeland Security will have on our federal law enforcement and drug interdiction efforts.*

*Since President Bush's June 6 announcement of his proposal to create a new Department of Homeland Security, members of Congress, the American public, and the Media have raised numerous questions. One question that is worthy of considerable discussion is the impact the creation of this new agency will have on critical, non-homeland security functions of the agencies the President has proposed for inclusion in the new Department.*

*For example, among the many duties of the U.S. Coast Guard is performing search and rescue operations and facilitating travel for commercial vessels. The Immigration and Naturalization Service provides numerous fee-based services for Legal immigrants. Other agencies that may be folded into the new department are tasked with interdicting illegal drugs and collecting tariffs.*

*Some have raised concerns that these critical services may not receive the attention they deserve from a Cabinet Secretary whose primary charge is to protect the Homeland. Moreover, some have questioned the wisdom of placing multiple, and possibly competing, missions within the same department.*

*Another issue worthy of considerable discussion is the Administration's decision not to include the CIA or FBI in the new Department. Some have asked how this new agency would have prevented the kind of intelligence and communications failures that led up to the September 11 attacks. It is not clear whether creation of a new Department of Homeland Security will guarantee that crucial intelligence and analysis would make it to those who most need to be familiar with it or whether the new agency will simply add another layer to the top of an already dense bureaucracy.*

*A fundamental question we will continue to ask ourselves and the proponents of this new Department is: Will it make us safer? To answer that question we must first take*

*the necessary steps to identify what went wrong and how similar failures of our system can be prevented in the future. Then we must make a determination as to whether this new proposal addresses the problems.*

*I am not convinced that our first priority out not to be addressing those clear failures that led up to September 11 before we address what may be longer term problems. I am also interested to hear from our witnesses today what impact the transition process alone would have on existing security and non-security operations of our various agencies and their employees.*

*Again, Mr. Chairman thank you for convening this hearing today. I welcome our witnesses and look forward to a worthwhile discussion of these important issues.*