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**HOUSE DEMOCRATIC WOMEN DEMAND THAT ANTI-CHOICE VIOLATORS WHO  
BREAK THE LAW AND BLOCK ACCESS TO CLINICS ARE HELD ACCOUNTABLE**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), Democratic women House members, and pro choice organizations today rallied in support of a provision in the Senate version of the bankruptcy bill that would bar those impeding access to abortion clinics from using the bankruptcy codes to get out of paying court-ordered fines and penalties.□□□

For years, violators of the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act (FACE) have been abusing the bankruptcy laws.□ A compromise reached by Senators Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Orrin Hatch (R-UT) would ensure that violators are held financially accountable for breaking the law.□□

Below is Schakowsky's statement from today's news conference on Capitol Hill:

*It is illegal in this country to commit acts of violence against family planning clinics and illegal, as well, to harass, threaten, or intimidate women who go to those clinics, thanks to the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrance (FACE) Act.□ But some of these lawbreakers are escaping penalties and fines by declaring bankruptcy.□□*

*The bankruptcy reform bill is currently in a conference committee.□ Senators Schumer and Hatch have come to a compromise on an amendment that changes current law so those who commit illegal acts against family-planning clinics and are charged with paying a fine cannot have their debt discharged if they declare bankruptcy.□ We are here today to thank Senators Schumer and Hatch, to pledge our support for keeping this provision in the bill, and to oppose efforts underway to remove it.□□□ This is a critical issue to the health and safety of health-care professionals and the women who rely on them.*

*I also wish to thank the advocates who, as we all know, work tirelessly not only to protect a woman's legal right to choose to have an abortion, but who work to ensure the safety of those who provide critical health care services to women and to ensure that women who need their services can go into their offices safely and without being harassed.*

*We are sending a clear and strong message to all those who would tolerate allowing anti-choice extremists the right to avoid punishment:□ We will not stand for it!□ Those who break the law by harassing, threatening, and intimidating women entering clinics, who send death threats to women's health care providers, and who vandalize health clinics must not get away without punishment.□□*

***Anti-choice protesters are actually taught and trained how to repeatedly break laws protecting access to clinics and then how to manipulate bankruptcy laws to get out of paying their fines. Those who commit these crimes, not only succeed in committing acts of violence, but then bring further damage to the clinics by forcing them to spend scarce and precious resources on lawyer fees and other fees associated with ongoing court cases.***

□ □

***Now the credit card companies, who stand to profit greatly from the bankruptcy bill, are in on it - they are airing radio ads in New York to pressure Senator Schumer to back down. Well we are here to say stay strong! In the absence of the Schumer/Hatch provision, the Bankruptcy Code will continue to be subject to exploitation by those who perpetrate violence against clinics, allowing these lawbreakers to operate with impunity while depriving women of their access to health care and Constitutional rights. This is unacceptable.***