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SCHAKOWSKY WELCOMES HOUSE PASSAGE OF INS REFORM BILL

A FIRST STEP TOWARD MEETING GOALS OF ENSURING SECURITY AND IMPROVING SERVICE

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) welcomed passage of long overdue legislation by the House to overhaul the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) as a first step towards ensuring security and improving service.□□

"The INS has long been a dysfunctional agency causing thousands of constituents in my immigrant-rich district needless headaches and heartbreaks.□ While this bill is not perfect, it is a step in the right direction and it contains remedies that are long overdue," said Schakowsky.

The Barbara Jordan Immigration Reform and Accountability Act (H.R. 3231) would:

- **abolish the INS and replace it with an Office of the Associate Attorney General for Immigration Affairs (OAAGIA) in the Justice Department. The Associate Attorney General for Immigration Affairs would be appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate;□**

- **create two separate bureaus for service and enforcement - the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services and the Bureau of Immigration Enforcement - within the OAAGIA . The Associate Attorney General would oversee and supervise the work of the directors of the service and enforcement bureaus;□**

- **establish a general counsel within the OAAGIA as the principal legal advisor of the Associate Attorney General, to provide legal advice on all legal matters affecting the OAAGIA and the two bureaus; and□**

- **establish an Office of Children's Affairs in the OAAGIA with a director to coordinate and implement law and policy for unaccompanied alien children.**

Schakowsky, who was successful in bringing about positive change after exposing INS mismanagement and mistreatment of customers in Chicago in 1999, said that she is

hopeful that the Senate would address the shortcomings of the House bill to ensure that the service and enforcement functions of the immigration policy are equally served.□
Among her concerns: strengthening the ombudsman provisions, that fees are reasonable and used to improve the quality of service, and ensuring that children, who arrive at this nation alone, and that asylum seekers are treated fairly.