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**DEMOCRATS LEAD CHARGE TO HELP LEGAL
IMMIGRANT FAMILIES WHO NEED FOOD**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Democratic-led effort to deliver assistance to legal immigrant families who need food, baby formula and daily nutritional essentials today moved forward. The House voted to instruct its conferees with the Senate on the Farm Security Act to ensure that legal immigrants have access to food stamps.

Specifically, Democrats are working to restore food stamps to legal immigrant families who have been working and paying taxes in the United States for the past four years, to refugees and to the disabled, and to children regardless of when they enter the country.

"Legal immigrants pay taxes, work hard, fight in our military and play by the rules, and their children will grow up to be doctors, nurses, police officers and teachers. They contribute to the health and welfare of our nation. Denying them and their children the most basic of needs is not only shameful, but uncivilized," Schakowsky said.

She added, "Society demands that students meet minimum standards and that working parents do their job and do it right. Children can not excel in school while the pangs of hunger plague their stomachs. Parents are not able to perform to their fullest potential if they are hungry and constantly concerned with feeding their children."

Schakowsky pointed to data which found that while "citizen children" are eligible for food stamps, their legal immigrant parents do not qualify for assistance. "As a result," Schakowsky said, "the food benefit one child is receiving is most likely being distributed through the entire family, leaving less for all."

"Immigrants have contributed immeasurably to our nation's rich traditions, history, and culture. We will not rest until we ensure that all legal immigrants are treated with the dignity and respect, and have access to the benefits they rightfully deserve," Schakowsky concluded.