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**SCHAKOWSKY CHALLENGES PRESIDENT TO STAND UP FOR AMERICA'S WORKERS**

**CHICAGO, IL - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today challenged President Bush to stand up for America's workers and support the Democratic economic relief proposal that would spark the economy while offering immediate assistance to millions of unemployed workers. Schakowsky joined other members of the Illinois Congressional delegation at a news conference organized by the local Machinists Union.**

**"We are facing a crisis in America today. Under President Bush's watch, our economy is in recession, the budget surplus has gone to the rich, and almost three million workers have lost their jobs. His solution to our problems: tax breaks for large companies, shipping American jobs abroad, and rewarding corporations that lay off workers. The House Republicans even passed a so-called economic stimulus bill that would have sent a \$254 million bonus to Enron as it was about to squander the life savings of its employees. It is extraordinary that Congress and the President are willing to bail out the airline industry and give tax cuts to mega-corporations without even throwing a bone to unemployed workers. Their plan will not put the jobless back to work, spark the economy, or stimulate growth.**

**"Millions of Americans will be glued to their TV sets next Tuesday to listen to President Bush deliver his First State of the Union address. Among them, there will be families who have lost loved ones in the September 11 terrorist attacks, and service men and women who may soon be asked to join their colleagues overseas in battle. And we will all anxiously listen to what the President has in store for our nation's homeland security and defense.**

**"But that is not the only reason why American families will be tuning in. They want to hear about the state of our nation's economy and in great detail what the President has in store for the millions of workers now living day to day without a paycheck, without healthcare, or the most basic of needs. They want to know what President Bush is willing to do to assist the 2.6 million people who have lost their jobs since he took office, including 63,000 in Illinois. They are anxious to find out what President Bush and his crack economic team will do to help the more than half of the 8.3 million unemployed who do not qualify for unemployment compensation.**

**"This President has had a plan all along and he's been trying to sell it to the American people. We're not buying it. We see right through this latest Republican experiment in voodoo economics.**

**"The Democrats have offered an economic recovery plan that is based on three basic and economically sound principles. First, it invests in American workers and small businesses. The plan offers immediate unemployment insurance and health coverage**

**for laid-off workers, tax rebates for middle- and low-income workers, and tax incentives for small businesses to encourage immediate investment in new plants, equipment and job creation. It also reduces unemployment and strengthens our security by putting people to work on projects like airport safety and school modernization.**

**"Second, any tax incentives must be targeted to businesses and must be designed to spur recovery and growth, and most importantly, hiring of new workers. These incentives are temporary and well thought out, unlike the Republican plan, which provides for permanent tax giveaways to large corporations. We are not throwing money at businesses and holding our breath that they'll do the right thing. We're providing temporary tax breaks to companies who commit to do the right thing.**

**"Finally, and just as important, the Democratic plan is fiscally responsible, protects Social Security and Medicare, and long term economic prospects.**

**"President Bush, you have one week before you come before Congress and the whole nation to report on the state of our union. Our Union is strong and united as we battle the forces of terrorism. But the state of our economy is getting weaker by the day as thousands more join millions already on the unemployment rolls. I challenge you to join the Democrats and stand for America's workers and hard working families first."**