

SCHAKOWSKY ORGANIZES BIPARTISAN EFFORT CALLING ON ADMINISTRATION TO HELP WOMEN AND CHILDREN FLEEING DOMESTIC ABUSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today called on the President to include \$50 million in his FY 2003 budget to help women and children fleeing domestic abuse. □ □ □

In a bipartisan letter organized by Schakowsky and signed by 76 House members, the members wrote, *we request that you include \$50 million in the Housing and Urban Development FY 2003 budget for transitional housing assistance to individuals who are fleeing domestic abuse.* □ The members pointed out that transitional housing assistance was authorized in the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 for one year, however, this vital program never received any appropriations. □

They added, *Transitional housing can help prevent domestic violence by giving women and their children a safe place to go.* □ *This program is even more critical now since, as families are struggling to survive in this economy, domestic violence rates are expected to rise.* □ *Currently, emergency shelters struggle to meet an increased demand for services, with 32 percent of the requests for shelter by homeless families going unmet and 88 percent of cities having to turn away homeless families because of inadequate resources.* □ *Battered women and their children comprise an increasing proportion of the population in need of emergency shelter.* □

It is crucial to provide a stable, sustainable home base for women who have left situations of domestic violence and are learning new job skills, participating in educational programs, working full-time jobs, or searching for adequate child care in order to gain self-sufficiency. □ *Transitional housing resources and services provide a continuum between emergency shelter provision and independent living, they concluded.* □

Last Congress, Schakowsky introduced the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Victims Housing Act to ensure adequate emergency shelters for women and children fleeing domestic abuse, which was included in the Violence Against Women Act of 2000. □ Schakowsky will introduce the same legislation next month, which is cosponsored by a bipartisan group of over 90 House members, and would authorize \$50 million for a transitional housing program for FY 2003 and funding for subsequent years