

DECEMBER 11, 2001

SCHAKOWSKY SALUTES HOUSE ACTION ON LEGISLATION TO HELP VETERANS

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today hailed the approval by the House of the Homeless Veterans Assistance Act and the Veterans Benefits Act. She said, "I believe that veterans who served our country deserve the fairest treatment available and that our national priorities must recognize the contributions of all military personnel. This Congress should remain committed to our veterans and work to ensure that they are provided the best possible service."

Below is Schakowsky's Congressional Record statement:

"Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Senate amendments to the House passed Homeless Veterans Assistance Act and Veterans Benefits Act. These amendments will provide greater care for our nation's veterans and will help America keep its promise to protect the men and women that have done so much to protect America.

"I supported the Homeless Veterans Assistance Act when it passed the House of Representatives, and now, I support the Senate-passed version because it does much more. This bill will provide new programs, and will modify existing programs, to furnish a multitude of services for homeless veterans. These services include outreach, rehabilitation, vocational counseling and training, and transitional housing assistance to homeless veterans. In other words, this bill seeks to fight the causes of veterans' homelessness at their root.

"Mr. Speaker, as many as 80,000 of our country's 3 million homeless are in the city of Chicago. Many of these are veterans. There are few things as tragic as the sight of the homeless set against the background of a society with so much wealth and prosperity. We have the responsibility to do more. This bill is a modest step in the right direction. Providing veterans with the best possible benefits and rewarding them for their tremendous service to our country is important to me. I believe we must ensure that veterans' programs are sufficiently funded. Providing the means for disenfranchised veterans to renew their lives is the very least we can do.

"I also supported the Veterans Benefits Act when it passed the House because it provides a cost of living adjustment for the rates of veterans' disability compensation, additional compensation for dependents, the clothing allowance for certain disabled adult children, and dependency and indemnity compensation for surviving spouses and children. This legislation seeks to ensure that our veterans and their families are not left behind in the struggle to move forward in these pressing economic times.

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