

OCTOBER 29, 2001

**SCHAKOWSKY DEMANDS RELIEF FOR AIRLINE WORKERS**

**JOINS MACHINISTS UNION AND ASSOCIATION OF FLIGHT ATTENDANTS DURING RALLY IN DES PLAINES**

**CHICAGO, IL - During a rally with members of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today demanded that Congress deliver relief to the thousands of airline workers who have lost their jobs and healthcare insurance as a result of the September 11 terrorist attacks. The union represents more than 40,000 current or recently laid-off employees of United Airlines. Representatives from the Association of Flight Attendants, which saw 12,000 of its members lose their jobs since September 11, also attended the rally.**

**"Soon after September 11, Congress authorized \$15 billion of your money for a bailout package to the airline industry big wigs while defeating all Democratic efforts to help aviation workers. A few days later, President Bush handed over the check to the industry's top executives. This sham bailout package included compensation protections for those on top of the salary chain and sweetheart deals for the airlines, and ignored the workers who are now losing their jobs as a result of the September 11 tragedy," Schakowsky said.**

**"It is unconscionable that during this time of national crisis those who need our assistance are left out, while big business and its Capitol Hill lobbyists fill their pockets with your tax dollars. What about the help to the hundreds of thousands of flight attendants, baggage handlers, mechanics and the ticket agents?" Schakowsky asked.**

**She added, "Americans are still suffering from the double hit of the economic downturn and the fallout from September 11. Last week, Congress ignored their needs and passed a Republican so-called economic stimulus package that shamelessly raids the Treasury at a time of crisis on behalf of the wealthiest corporations and barely throws a bone to unemployed workers."**

**"Democrats have a plan for the economy. Democrats have a plan for airline security. And Democrats have a plan for you, America's workers. We have not forgotten about your dedication and sacrifice. It was you who went back to work after September 11 and ensured the safety of the flying public, in the air and on the ground. And for those of you who are out of work, struggling to make ends meet, without health insurance, your bailout package must be delivered," Schakowsky concluded.**

**The Displaced Workers Assistance Act, H.R. 2955, sponsored by Democratic Leader Dick Gephardt (D-MO) and U.S. Representative Alcee Hastings (D-FL), would provide individuals who exhaust their 26-week state unemployment insurance, with an additional**

**52 weeks of cash payments funded by federal dollars. Those who do not qualify for state unemployment benefits would receive 26 weeks of federally financed unemployment insurance. Also, the legislation would provide funds for retraining benefits. In addition, the federal government would fully reimburse eligible individuals for their COBRA health insurance premiums. Individuals who do not qualify for COBRA and are otherwise uninsured would be eligible for Medicaid with the federal government covering 100 percent of the premiums. These health care benefits would last for a maximum of 18 months.**