

OCTOBER 15, 2001

STATEMENT OF U.S. REPRESENTATIVE JAN SCHAKOWSKY FOR ACORN RALLY IN SUPPORT OF AN ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGE

CHICAGO, IL - I want to thank ACORN for holding today's rally and for continuing to be a strong voice for low income and working families and for our community.

Our nation has experienced an indescribable tragedy. Millions of Americans are not only suffering from the emotional scars, they are also feeling the economic pains. Over 140,000 airline workers have lost their jobs and their health care coverage; families are no longer able to afford the monthly mortgage payments; and small businesses across the country are going bankrupt. Even before September 11, countless others were struggling to pay for health care, housing, living in poverty, and living on the streets. Now, these problems are even worse.

It must be the priority of this Congress to set forth an agenda, an American economic stimulus package, that puts families, workers, and our communities first, ahead of tax cuts for rich. Unfortunately, there are some in Congress who refuse to see it our way. No matter the circumstances, they promote their agenda of more taxes to the rich, big business, and the well connected. Don't take my word for it, just look at what is happening in Washington. The Republican Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee is pushing an economic stimulus package with billions of dollars for corporations and generous taxpayer giveaways to big business. Others are ready to vote through a new round of tax cuts (\$60 billion) that neither stimulates the economy nor helps those in need.

That is why I introduced a sound economic initiative, H.R. 2999, the First Things First Act of 2001, that will help the federal government meet the long term critical needs of millions of Americans and respond to the September 11th terrorist attacks. The First Things First Act would put on hold parts of President Bush's tax cut that benefit the wealthy, freeing at least \$340 billion for domestic priorities. It's not too much to ask that the richest people in America wait to receive a tax windfall so that our country can deal responsibly with the economic and national security crises we face today

I am also working with my Democratic colleagues on a real economic stimulus bill worth more than \$130 billion to provide funding for health care benefits, job retraining, unemployment compensation, and targeted tax relief for low income families.

Like you, my priority is helping American workers and families and strengthening our communities. It's time for an economic stimulus package that works for all of us, not just some of us.