

JULY 30, 2001

**SCHAKOWSKY CALLS ON REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP  
TO GET OUT OF THE WAY OF REAL REFORMS TO PROTECT HMO PATIENTS**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - In a speech delivered today on the House floor, U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) called on the Republican Leadership to schedule an immediate vote on the "real" Patients' Bill of Rights. The bipartisan Ganske-Dingell-Norwood-Berry Patients' Rights Bill, H.R. 2563, which is supported by patients, medical professionals, and health caregivers, would ensure that HMOs are held accountable for their actions.

Below is Schakowsky statement before the House:

I rise today to support H.R. 2563, the Ganske-Dingell-Norwood-Berry Patients' Rights Bill and to urge its passage. Patients in my district and throughout the country have been waiting far too long for protection against HMO abuses. But they want real reform, not a sugar pill that may go down well with the managed care industry but provides no relief for patients. H.R. 2563 is the only bill that will provide real relief, and the Republican leadership ought to schedule it for a vote.

Just look at who supports it and who rejects the Fletcher placebo, which is an alternative plan that fails to give patients the rights they deserve.

- The International Association of Firefighters supports H.R. 2563 because it provides protections to local firefighters, unlike the Fletcher bill.

- The National Partnership for Women and Families calls H.R. 2563 the "right choice for American families" and only bill that "provides real patient protection."

- The American Academy of Pediatrics writes that, "More than any other competing measure, H.R. 2563 ensures that all children - from infancy through adolescence, in primary care and in specialty treatment - will have access to quality care from physicians who are trained and educated to meet their unique health care needs."

- The Paralyzed Veterans of America believes that "H.R. 2563 has the strongest provisions in numerous areas critical to high quality health care for people with disabilities."

- The League of Women Voters supports the H.R. 2563 bill because it provides

**"strong and needed protections," while the Fletcher bill "establishes an appeals process that will put the rights of health plans ahead of patients."**

**- The American Nurses Association, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and others tell us that the H.R. 2563 "provides women the patient protections they need," while the Fletcher bill provides only "hollow promises."□**

**We should listen to patients, medical professionals and health caregivers.□ We should pass effective and enforceable patients' rights - H.R. 2563 - now.**