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**REPORT FINDS 31% OF NATIONWIDE NURSING HOMES
COMMITTED VIOLATIONS AND RESIDENT ABUSE ON THE RISE**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today said that a [report](#) released by Representative Henry Waxman (D-CA) is a cause for alarm for hundreds of thousands of nursing home residents. She added that Congressional action is needed to put in place mandatory staffing ratios that would increase the number of qualified and properly trained medical staff, thereby helping to guarantee quality care at the more than 16,900 nursing home facilities nationwide.

The report, which was prepared by the Democratic staff of the Government Reform Committee, was released at a briefing where families, medical staff, and administrators testified about the abuse occurring daily at nursing homes nationwide.

"There are two groups of people who know firsthand about the nursing home crisis our nation is experiencing today. One group is the residents and their families. The other is those healthcare workers who are committed to meeting the needs of their patients, delivering quality care, and ending all abuse," Schakowsky said.

The report found that 31% of the nursing homes in the United States (5,283) were cited for an abuse violation that had the potential to cause more than minimal harm. These nursing homes were cited for almost 9,000 abuse violations from 1999 to 2001. Even more alarming, nearly 10% of the nursing homes in the United States (1,601) were cited for abuse violations that caused actual harm to residents, injury, or even potential death.

In addition, the report found that since 1996, the percentage of violations in nursing homes has almost tripled. The number of nursing homes cited for abuse violations reached 16% in 2000, up 10.1% since 1996.

"Our parents and grandparents should not have to endure another day of inhumane treatment, humiliation and at times, life-threatening mistreatment. That's why I will soon reintroduce the Quality Care for Nursing Home Patients Act to require minimum staffing ratios. Through sound public policy, I believe we can help end the abuse and ensure that every resident gets prompt and quality care," Schakowsky said.

The Quality Care for Nursing Home Patients Act, introduced last year by Schakowsky, would have increased the number of qualified and properly trained staff. If enacted the bill would have set minimum administration and staffing ratio standards for nursing homes that receive Medicare and/or Medicaid funding, while requiring that the Health Care Financing Administration provide adequate reimbursement to meet those

standards. Schakowsky will reintroduce this bill again this year.

Last year, Schakowsky released a report that found that 15% of the 290 nursing homes in the Chicago area -- more than one out of every seven -- had violations that caused actual harm to residents or placed them at risk of death or serious injury. And in January, Schakowsky released another report, which found that 35,000 nursing home residents in the Chicago area could suffer from serious health problems due to lack of qualified health care staff. The report also showed that nursing homes that meet minimum staff levels have, on average, have 60% fewer health and safety violations than those that do not. The Democratic staff of the House Government Reform Committee prepared both reports.