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**SCHAKOWSKY JOINS COLLEAGUES TO CALL FOR END TO INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES BASED ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today joined her colleagues to call for an end to human rights abuses based on sexual orientation throughout the world. Schakowsky applauded the introduction of the International Human Rights Equality Resolution by U.S. Representatives Tom Lantos (D-CA), the ranking Democrat on the House International Relations Committee, and Connie Morella (R-MD).

The Resolution "condemns all violations of internationally recognized human rights norms based on the real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity of an individual;" calls for equal punishment under the law for human rights violations based on sexual orientation or gender identity; and "commends nongovernmental human rights organizations, including Amnesty international, Human Rights Watch, and the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, as well as the United States Department of State and the United Nations, for documenting the ongoing abuse of human rights on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity."

Schakowsky, who is a member of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, said, "The United States has a moral obligation to speak out against intolerance, hate, and discrimination throughout the world. Without clear, strong condemnation and action from the United States and all people of conscience, these violations of fundamental human rights will continue to be common place."

Schakowsky continued, " State-sanctioned false imprisonment, brutality, and murder based on sexual orientation and gender identity, whether real or perceived, continue across the globe. We cannot remain silent while these fundamental human rights are trampled and destroyed by the same governments expected to protect and serve its people."

She concluded, "We have made great strides in our own country, but we have a long way to go before true equality is realized for all people. We must also do what is right here at home and pass tougher laws to combat hate crimes in our communities. With the continued efforts of committed citizens, members of Congress, like Tom Lantos, and devoted organizations, we must continue to work for justice here at home and across the world."