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**SCHAKOWSKY COSPONSORS LEGISLATION
TO PROTECT THE GREAT LAKES FROM BIG GAS AND BIG OIL**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today said that her constituents and the residents of Chicago are united against any plans to drill for gas and oil in the Great Lakes.□□

Schakowsky cosponsored The Great Lakes Water Protection Act, legislation by Representative Bart Stupak (D-MI) that would prohibit drilling under the Great Lakes until the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) completes a study to examine the effect of such plans.□ The legislation would also require the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), a non-partisan scientific board, to review the EPA study.□ Furthermore, the bill directs the EPA and the NAS to submit their findings for Congressional review.□□ Finally, the legislation states that once Congress conducts its review, it can then act to lift the ban.□ Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) introduced companion legislation in the Senate.

"Consumers in the Midwest are paying more than \$2 for a gallon of gasoline and this past winter their natural gas bills tripled.□ At the same time, profits for oil and gas companies went through the roof.□ What is disturbing to me is that there are some who are willing to reward this reprehensible practice by the energy companies with a free pass to drill and dig in our Great Lakes and ANWR," Schakowsky said.

"The Great Lakes represent the world's largest source of free flowing fresh water and provide safe drinking water for millions of people.□ As a member of Congress who grew up enjoying Lake Michigan and whose constituents and family are just as committed to the Lake's long term viability, I am here to tell big gas and big oil - hands off," Schakowsky added.

She concluded, "I will fight any future proposal that will endanger the Lake's fragile ecosystem and our nation's greatest supply of fresh drinking water.□ I stand committed to protecting our natural resources, and will work with my colleagues to pass this worthy legislation."

Schakowsky also expressed concerns that suspension of plans to build a natural gas pipeline on the bottom of Lake Michigan are only temporary and fears that the Texas-based El Paso Corp. will renew its efforts to build the pipeline.

"While I am pleased that the plans for a gas pipeline under Lake Michigan have been put on hold, the threat is not over.□ We will not rest until this plan is nothing more than a pipe dream," Schakowsky said.