

JULY 25, 2000

**SCHAKOWSKY ENDORSES COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION BILL
INTRODUCED BY JUDICIARY COMMITTEE RANKING MEMBER CONYERS**

**BILL INCLUDES SCHAKOWSKY MEASURE TO
STRENGTHEN RIGHTS FOR BATTERED IMMIGRANT WOMEN**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today expressed her strong support for the Restoration of Fairness in Immigration Act of 2000, a comprehensive immigration reform bill introduced by Judiciary Committee Ranking Member John Conyers (D-MI).

Schakowsky, who is a cosponsor of the bill, said, "We've clearly identified the problems with our immigration policies. Unfortunately, this Republican Congress has refused to take any meaningful steps to correct the wrongs. With this bill, we now have the opportunity to give our nation's immigrants what they deserve: fairness and equality."

The bill would repeal harmful measures included in the 1996 immigration law, including the retroactive deportation of legal immigrants for minor crimes. The bill would also encourage family reunification by streamlining the process and would allow immigrants to adjust their immigration status without having to leave the country. In addition, the bill would guarantee fairness in both the asylum and naturalization/legalization processes.

Also included in the bill is a provision to strengthen the rights of battered immigrant women, a measure identical to Schakowsky's bill H.R. 3083, the Battered Immigrant Protection Act. Just like Schakowsky's bill, this provision would build on the successes of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, allowing battered immigrant women to escape domestic abuse by addressing adverse incentives that trap them in violent relationships.

Schakowsky testified last week on her bill before the Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims. She said during the hearing, "The Battered Immigrant Women Protection Act will give battered immigrant women access to a variety of legal protections that they need in order to flee violent homes and take control of their lives."

Other provisions in the Restoration of Fairness in Immigration Act of 2000 include measures to protect immigrants and increase resources to go after illegal sweat shop operators; ensure that all employment-based immigrants visas are used; and ensure due process in immigration proceedings by allowing the Attorney General to release immigrants from detention centers who do not pose a threat.