

□ *Ensures Affordable, Quality Health Care for All Americans*

WASHINGTON, DC (March 21, 2010) – History was made today in the century long fight to reform the American health care system and provide quality, affordable health care to all Americans. With the strong support of Rep. Jan Schakowsky, D-IL, the House tonight passed comprehensive health care reform by a vote of 219 to 212 making health care affordable for the middle class, providing security for seniors, and guaranteeing access to health insurance coverage for the uninsured.

“Madame Speaker, tonight I want to express my profound thanks to the people of Illinois’ 9th Congressional District, the place where I was born and lived nearly all my life, for the privilege of being here today to cast my vote for this historic health care measure. My life’s work has been to answer what is at bottom a moral question – Will the United States of America continue to allow its people to lose their lives, their homes and their fundamental sense of security, or we will finally decide that a proud and wealthy country like ours has an ethical obligation to provide access to health care for everybody? Is it even credible to think that a country as rich in so many ways as ours can’t afford to do this?

I am so proud that today, this House, under the leadership of perhaps THE most effective Speaker in US history, Nancy Pelosi, will say to all those parents agonizing that their sick child is excluded from insurance coverage because of a pre-existing condition, sleep well. When our courageous and visionary President signs this law, that will end. This bill tells all Americans suffering from a chronic condition whose insurance companies set lifetime or annual caps on coverage, those days are over this year. Seniors will learn the happy truth that they will get more help with prescription drug costs and that the life of Medicare itself has been extended. And millions and millions of Americans will find out that this bill will mean that they will be able to afford the health care they need.

I am humbled and grateful to be here today to vote yes.”