

*WASHINGTON, DC (February 23, 2011) – Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) issued the following statement in praise of the Obama Administration for its new stance on the Defense of Marriage Act; they will no longer defend the law in court.*

“The Obama Administration’s decision not to provide support for the Defense of Marriage Act in the courts marks yet another important civil rights victory. DOMA sets a definition of marriage that prohibits gay and lesbian couples from exercising the right to marry the person they love. The decision not to defend the legality of DOMA is the right thing to do. This decision, however, does not mean that our work is complete. Whether the courts overturn DOMA or we win its repeal in Congress, I strongly believe that we need to act to provide full and equal marriage rights to all.

“Last year, the Congress sent another essential bill to President Obama for his signature: the repeal of Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell, the discriminatory law that prevented gays and lesbians from serving their country openly and resulted in the discharge of thousands of valued service men and women, putting our security at risk. Now that we’ve recognized the rights of gays and lesbians to serve their country, we should recognize their rights to marry.

“President Obama’s leadership has provided growing momentum to fight for what is right, to knock down barriers and to ensure respect and equality for all Americans.”