

*WASHINGTON, DC (March 7, 2011) – Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) submitted the following statement in recognition of General Casimir Pulaski, American patriot.*

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Casimir Pulaski Day and the great contributions that General Pulaski made to our fledgling nation. Casimir Pulaski was a true fighter for freedom in his native Poland and elsewhere in the world. He was born in 1745 and become well known in his fight against Russian aggression in Poland. Despite his valiant effort to defend Poland, he was exiled but soon found his way to the United States through the help of Benjamin Franklin.

General Pulaski wholeheartedly committed himself to the fight for freedom in the Revolutionary War, fighting alongside General George Washington. Casimir Pulaski became the “father of the American Cavalry” and was named Brigadier General in charge of four cavalry brigades. At the Battle of Brandywine, he provided vital information on the British troop movements that ultimately saved General Washington’s life. General Pulaski heroically gave his life in the Battle

of Savannah.

Casimir Pulaski Day is celebrated as a state holiday in Illinois. Aside from Warsaw, Chicago has the second highest concentration of people with Polish ancestry in the world. He is celebrated not just by Polish-Americans but by the entire Chicagoland and all those who cherish freedom.

General Pulaski was only the first of countless Polish Americans who made major contributions to the development of our nation. Americans of Polish ancestry continue to leave an indelible mark on our country in every field of endeavor. Among them are Mike Ditka, legendary Chicago Bears coach; Steve Wozniak, co-founder of Apple; John Dingell, congressman from Michigan and Dean of the House of Representatives; Richard Trumka, AFL-CIO president; Zbigniew Brzezinski, former National Security Advisor; Pat Sajak, host of Wheel of Fortune; and Frank Anthony Wilczek, theoretical physicist and Nobel laureate - to name just a few.

Today, I join the rest of Chicago in celebrating the life Casimir Pulaski and the gifts he gave to our nation. General Pulaski stands as a prime example of the important role that Polish immigrants have had in the United States and serves as a role model for us all.