

Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky at Maine East Allen Kaleta - Niles Bugle

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Hoping to get high school students more interested in the political process, Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) accepted an invitation from the Maine East High School Social Science Department to address the students, Monday afternoon, Sept. 22.

Speaking to group of 150 students, Schakowsky covered a number of topics from documented aliens to the expansion of O' Hare International Airport in the one hour assembly with the students.

Schakowsky opened the address to the students by giving them an example of her typical day and then later opened the floor to questions.

Making sure they knew where she stood on the important issues of the day, students fired questions that were representative of a White House press conference.

Bringing environmental issues out first , students asked Schakowsky about her position on the expansion of O' Hare airport and drilling for oil in Alaska.

" I support the O' Hare expansion, " but there will be decisions that will need to be made about air pollution, and noise," said Schakowsky.

The, third term congresswoman, opposes any drilling for oil in Alaska and feels that the United States should promote alternative energy methods.

Schakowsky favors the U.S. raising the fuel efficiency on vehicles and the development of hybrid automobiles.

" We have an opportunity to shift our resources into alternative energy, " she said.

"The new energy bill really short changes alternative energy sources," said Schakowsky, " It's way past time for us to be engaged in alternative energy sources."

A long-time supporter of the rights of documented aliens, Schakowsky answered a student's

question regarding health care for documented aliens working in the United States on visas.

"To me the United States is a country of immigrants," she said " we have to find out a way where the promise of America is still available to everyone."

Schakowsky, 59, began her political career as a housewife in Mt. Prospect, Il. when she and five other women took up the issue of expiration dates on food. And rode her consumer activism to Washington. She still comes home on weekends.

During a discussion after the congresswoman left, students spoke out on her honesty in answering questions and for a few students changed their perception of politicians.

"In the past when speaking with politicians I did not feel the questions were answered honestly, but she answered all the questions honestly," said one student.