

OCTOBER 12, 2000

**SCHAKOWSKY CALLS FOR INCREASED INTERNATIONAL
FAMILY PLANNING AND REPEAL OF GLOBAL GAG RULE**

WASHINGTON, D.C - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) and her colleagues today joined Population Action International and the International Family Planning Coalition to highlight the importance of international family planning programs and the need to repeal the global gag rule.□□

"International family planning is a matter of life and death.□ It improves the health and well being of women, men, and children around the world and saves lives.□ At a time when more than one woman dies each minute from a pregnancy-related complication and complications of pregnancy and childbirth are the leading cause of death and disability for women in developing countries between the ages of 15 to 49, the United States has a responsibility to do more, not less," Schakowsky said.

She added, "The first thing we must do is repeal the global gag rule which has harmed women and families around the world.□ The global gag rule is hypocritical; it is offensive, and it is wrong.□ Second, we must increase our commitment and our funding for international family planning."□

"At its highest level, the funding international family planning received amounted to just over \$2 per American, or less than a Starbucks latte.□ Increased access to family planning services increases child survival rates, reduces maternal death rates, and improves women's reproductive health overall. Women's health is a priority and we will not be an endgame bargaining chip--Not this year," Schakowsky concluded.