

SEPTEMBER 13, 2000

SCHAKOWSKY JOINS CONGRESSIONAL COLLEAGUES IN WELCOMING INDIA'S PRIME MINISTER OF & APPROVING H.RES. 572

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today joined her colleagues in approving H. Res. 572, a resolution hailing the visit of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee as a "[s]ignificant step toward broadening and deepening the friendship and cooperation between the United States and India."

□ Schakowsky, who is member of the Congressional India Caucus, was one of only eight members to join President Clinton on his historic trip to India this year.

Below is Schakowsky's Congressional Record statement in support of the H.Res. 572.

"Mr. Speaker, I am so proud to join my colleagues, the Distinguished Chairman and the ranking Democratic member of the International Relations Committee in welcoming to the United States the Honorable Prime Minister of India, Atal Behari Vajpayee.□□

"On behalf of Illinois' Indian American community and the people of Illinois in the 9th Congressional District, I want to express a most sincere welcome and best wishes for an enjoyable and meaningful visit to Prime Minister Vajpayee.□□

"As my colleagues and the Prime Minister are aware, the Chicago Metropolitan area boasts one of our country's most diverse populations, including a thriving Indian-American community of over 100,000 that is growing every year.□ As a member of Congress who values the relationship between our two nations and recognizes the significance of Prime Minister Vajpayee's visit, I believe this is an opportunity to strengthen relations between India and our country even further. The Prime Minister's□ visit also gives the Indian American community a chance to showcase its contributions to American society and to the U.S.-India dialogue.□□ █

"I was fortunate to be one of eight members of Congress privileged to join President Clinton on his historic trip to India earlier this year.□ That was such an incredible and valuable experience for me, one which I learned from and which has helped me to understand the rich history and cultural traditions of a great number of my constituents who are of Indian descent.□□

"I was so touched and honored by the warm reception the President's delegation received.□□ I know that we will all do our best to reciprocate so that Prime Minister Vajpayee's visit is greeted with the honor and respect it deserves.

"On Thursday, Prime Minister Vajpayee will address a joint session of Congress.□ This will be the first address to a joint session of Congress by an Indian Prime Minister in six

years and the only address by a world leader to the 106th Congress.

"It is vital that on this historic occasion Congress sends a strong message on the importance of our relationship with India in such critical areas as trade, national security, health, science and technology and education. The friendship between our people has never been stronger and the relationship between our governments has reached a new height of cooperation. That is why I am a proud original cosponsor of H. Res. 572. The resolution expresses the Sense of the Congress that the United States and India should continue to work together in these important areas."

"I urge all members to vote in support of it, and on behalf of myself, my family and my constituents, I offer a wholehearted and gracious welcome to Prime Minister Vajpayee."