

(September 22, 2005) Congressman Lipinski: H.R. 250 Good Start,

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But We Can Do Better for American Workers

WASHINGTON, DC - Yesterday, Congressman Dan Lipinski joined the U.S. House of Representatives to pass the Manufacturing Technology Competitiveness Act of 2005 (H.R. 250). The legislation - which originated in the Science Committee - was designed to stimulate manufacturing, jobs and innovation in the U.S.

Congressman Lipinski, a member of the Science Committee, supported the bill today because it funds the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) - a job creation program strongly supported by Committee Democrats - and it authorizes programs under the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

Dollar for dollar, NIST programs are among the most successful federal investments and have a direct impact on the U.S. economy. The NIST program with the most direct impact on the U.S. job market is the one major program this bill fails to fund - the Advanced Technology Program (ATP).

"This bill does some good, but it is a missed opportunity for Illinois manufacturers," stated Congressman Lipinski. "We should take every opportunity to invest in programs that are clearly successful like the ATP - a program that is producing jobs for Illinois workers."

Since 2001, we have lost almost 150,000 manufacturing jobs in Illinois, and federal grant programs such as MEP and ATP are instrumental to helping manufacturers remain competitive in a tight market. A survey of the two MEP centers in Illinois revealed that this program helped create or retain almost 3,000 jobs and yielded more than \$25 million in savings for Illinois manufacturers for fiscal year 2003 alone.

"This problem is not going away - valuable home-grown businesses are lost to cheaper markets overseas every year," said Congressman Lipinski. "Illinois' small and medium-sized manufacturers are the foundation of many communities - when they grow, communities prosper. MEP and ATP are programs that have demonstrated success time and time again. I will continue to support these and other programs that will help Illinois workers and manufacturers."