

(February 21, 2006) LIPINSKI OPPOSES SALE OF AMERICAN PORT OPERATIONS TO DUBAI-BASED GOVERNMENT FIRM

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Cites Concerns about American National Security

WASHINGTON, DC - Today, Congressman Dan Lipinski urged the Bush Administration to negate a deal that would put Dubai Ports World (DPW) in charge of the operations of six American ports. DPW is a business owned by the United Arab Emirates. Lipinski joined other lawmakers in calling for a freeze in this transaction until a thorough investigation could be made into the national security implications.

"National Security must be paramount," Lipinski said. "Outsourcing the operations of our ports could prove disastrous when we should be doing more, not less, to make sure that weapons of mass destruction are not smuggled into our country."

Recently, Britain's Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company (P&O), which runs commercial operations at ports in Baltimore, Miami, New Jersey, New Orleans, New York, and Philadelphia, approved the company's acquisition by Thunder FZE, a subsidiary of Dubai-based Dubai Ports World. The takeover would put Dubai Ports World in charge of these six port operations along the eastern seaboard.

Critics of the transaction cite the United Arab Emirates' history as an operational and financial base for the hijackers who carried out the attacks of September 11, 2001. Additionally, they contend the UAE was an important transfer point for shipments of smuggled nuclear components sent to Iran, North Korea, and Libya by a Pakistani scientist.

"Ensuring security at our nation's ports is imperative to our continued fight against terrorism in our country," said Lipinski. "With 95 percent of cargo reaching US ports not inspected, it is especially irresponsible of the United States to allow DPW to operate these ports."