

## (July 20, 2006) Lipinski Urges Fair Trade Policy To Protect Jobs and National Defense

### LIPINSKI URGES FAIR TRADE POLICY TO PROTECT JOBS AND NATIONAL DEFENSE

#### Opposes Oman Free Trade Agreement

Washington, D.C. - Today, Congressman Dan Lipinski voted against the Oman Free Trade Agreement (OFTA) which weakens labor standards, gives incentives for outsourcing, and includes loopholes that could compromise U.S. port security. Despite strong opposition, the House of Representatives approved the agreement by a narrow vote of 221 to 205.

The US-Oman FTA would implement a free trade agreement between Oman and the United States, which would require market liberalization for most U.S. goods and services. Additionally under OFTA, the United States would be required to allow Omani companies the right to bid on landside port activities in the U.S.

"This bill not only provides incentives to ship American jobs overseas but also jeopardizes the security of this country," said Lipinski. "I strongly oppose any legislation that compromises the safety and security of this nation and continues to promote policies that take good paying jobs from Americans."

The US-Oman Free Trade Agreement would create a new right under international trade law that would require the United States to allow any Omani company access to bid on port operations in the United States.

"America cannot afford to be offered up to the highest bidder," continued Lipinski. "American jobs and American national security are not commodities and I oppose any efforts that would undermine job security or compromise the defense of our nation."

Further addressing critical trade issues today, Congressman Lipinski participated in a Small Business Committee hearing focusing on China's unfair trade practices, including China's practice of manipulating its currency. Lipinski pointed out that currency manipulation makes U.S. goods more expensive and costs Americans their jobs.

"We must stand up for American workers," he said, "and demand that they be allowed to compete on a level playing field. Given a level playing field, Americans can compete against anyone in the world." Lipinski is a sponsor of HR 1498, which would apply U.S. countervailing laws to countries that manipulate their currencies.

"Undoubtedly, trade is a critical component of our national economy and I am a strong proponent of fair trade laws," stated Lipinski. "We must continue to protect American jobs, strengthen our national security, promote fair labor standards, and to encourage stronger economic growth."