

(September 22, 2006) Lipinski Meets With General Gagor, Chief of General Staff of Poland

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WASHINGTON, - Congressman Dan Lipinski, co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on Central and Eastern Europe, hosted a meeting on Wednesday with General Franciszek Gagor, Chief of General Staff of Polish Armed Forces. This bipartisan meeting gave members of Congress an opportunity to thank the head of the Polish military for his country's steadfast support of the United States and to discuss issues of importance to both countries.

"The United States has always enjoyed strong ties with Poland. Today, 9 million people in the United States claim Polish ancestry, including over 20 percent of the constituents in my district," said Lipinski. "I was happy to host this event and have the opportunity to meet with General Gagor. Events like this will ensure that the United States and Poland continue to enjoy a warm, bilateral relationship."

The United States and Poland have long had a close relationship, going all the way back to the birth of America and the aid of Pulaski and Kosciuszko in the Revolutionary War. Today Poland is playing an active role in aiding U.S. military efforts overseas. In 1999, Poland formally joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Currently 1,000 Polish troops are deployed in Iraq. When a recent call went out to NATO nations asking for more troops to be sent to Afghanistan, Poland was the first nation to respond, pledging 900 additional troops to that country.

"Poland has bravely fought alongside American troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, helping to ease some of the great burden on our armed forces" said Lipinski. "It was important for me and other members of Congress to meet with General Gagor in order to express our gratitude for his country's sacrifices. The meeting also allowed both sides to express a desire for continued cooperation between our countries."