

## (September 28, 2006) Congress Must Act For Small Businesses

Lipinski: Congress Must Do More to Help Small Businesses

Face Unfair Trade Competition and Rising Health Care Costs

WASHINGTON - With Congress preparing to recess until after the November elections, Congressman Dan Lipinski today joined with other members of the House Small Business Committee to challenge lawmakers for not doing more to help our nation's entrepreneurs.

"Small Businesses, who make up over 99 percent of all employer firms in America, face great challenges in the new, global economy," Lipinski said. "Small businesses in my district, especially manufacturers, are facing astonishing increases in health care costs, while at the same time dealing with unfair competition from foreign trade. And Congress has done little to address either of these issues."

The cost of health insurance coverage for both employers and employees has risen dramatically in recent years. These rising costs have disproportionately affected small businesses, resulting in more and more small firms dropping coverage or passing on more costs to employees. Though a number of proposals have been offered to help give small firms more choices, Congress has passed no major legislation to address the rising costs of health care.

Another challenge facing American small businesses, and manufacturers in particular, is international trade. With the trade deficit reaching record levels, especially with China, Lipinski called on Congress to help level the playing field for American companies in the global market.

"American manufacturing workers are feeling the job insecurity that comes from competing on an uneven playing field with foreign competitors," Lipinski said. "Our small businesses can compete with anyone in a fair game, but they cannot be expected to overcome unfair trade practices - it is up to the U.S. government to ensure that free trade is fair trade."

Lipinski has fought throughout this congress for a number of bills to level the playing field, including H.R. 1498, The Chinese Currency Act of 2005, which would enable American manufacturers and workers to gain relief from the unfair Chinese practice of undervaluing their currency.