

(February 28, 2007) Lipinski Bill Preserving Illinois Steel Jobs and Protecting Environment Passes

Lipinski Bill Preserving Illinois Steel Jobs and Protecting Environment Passes Committee Hurdle

WASHINGTON, DC - Today, the House Science and Technology Committee passed Congressman Dan Lipinski's bill to reauthorize the Steel and Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness Act of 1988, known as the Metals Initiative. H.R. 1126 provides research funding to make American steel and other metals more efficient and environmentally friendly.

"The steel industry and other metals industries are important parts of our national economy and they must remain innovative in order to stay competitive in the increasingly global economy," explained Lipinski. "Now more than ever it is vital to ensure that these industries are fully prepared to confront the challenges they face at home and abroad. This bill will protect valuable jobs and vital businesses in our area, while developing environmentally-friendly technologies to prepare for the challenges of tomorrow."

H.R. 1126 would reauthorize the Metals Initiative at \$12 million per year from Fiscal Year 2008 through 2012 to fund advanced metals research. With the legislation, these domestic industries will get help developing and implementing cost-saving and environmentally-friendly modern technology through critical R&D grants to universities and other research institutions. Through the collaborative research efforts of American companies, the Department of Energy, and institutions of higher education, this program has produced several successful and important technological breakthroughs that have resulted in vast environmental and energy savings.

Rep. Lipinski led efforts to quickly move the bill through the Science and Technology Committee today in order to ensure that the full House considers and passes the legislation early in this session.

"While the U.S. steel industry has significantly modernized over the past decade and a half, the pace of technology and the competition from overseas is relentless," said Lipinski. "Reauthorization of this bill is essential to preserve American jobs, to keep the customers of the U.S. steel industry strong, and to assure that our defense industry has the secure supply of domestic steel products it needs."

"The success of the American steel industry has a special personal significance for me," said Lipinski. "My father-in-law was a steelworker at Bethlehem Steel in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, before his plant closed due to foreign competition. This bill will help prevent further losses of good American jobs like his by increasing the competitiveness of our domestic industry."

In the 110th Congress, Lipinski was elected Vice Chair of the House Committee on Science and Technology. This unique position has allowed him to continue his leadership on such issues as advanced hydrogen research and development, development of technologies to reduce America's contributions to climate change, and improvement of math and science education in schools.

