

(November 8, 2007) Lipinski Votes Against Unfair Trade Deal That Hurts American Families

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Congressman Works to Expand Assistance to Workers Harmed by Foreign Imports

[Washington, DC] Today, Congressman Dan Lipinski (D-IL) voted against legislation to implement a trade agreement with Peru that would result in the loss of more American jobs and the further depression of wages for American workers. The Peru Free Trade Agreement, which ultimately passed 285-132, was negotiated by the Bush Administration and is intended to reduce trade barriers between the United States and Peru.

"This is another in a series of trade agreements that has hurt American families," said Rep. Lipinski. "Our trade agreements should create jobs and increase wages in this country rather than continue the outsourcing of millions of American jobs. Unfortunately, this trade agreement with Peru expands the misguided policy of NAFTA, CAFTA, and similar trade agreements."

"For this reason, I have already joined with Rep. Michaud (D-ME) in introducing legislation to repeal this flawed trade deal," said Rep. Lipinski.

NAFTA, the trade agreement between the U.S., Canada, and Mexico, was hailed as a victory for America's economy when it was implemented in January of 1994. However, since its implementation, outsourcing from the United States to Mexico and Canada has directly led to a net loss of 879,280 American jobs including over 47,000 jobs in Illinois. In the same period, real wages for most working Americans have remained stagnant.

"The impact of trade agreements has been particularly devastating on those who work in manufacturing," said Rep. Lipinski. "NAFTA and the other flawed trade agreements implemented since 1994 have resulted in the loss of over 3 million American manufacturing jobs, including over 100,000 jobs in Chicagoland alone, many in my district. Manufacturing jobs are typically well-paid, and maintaining a domestic manufacturing base is essential for ensuring that the U.S. is not dependent on hostile, foreign nations for goods that are critical for our economy and critical for our national defense."

In an effort to help address some of the hardships families face as a result of bad trade agreements, Congressman Lipinski helped pass legislation last week expanding assistance for workers who have suffered as a result of foreign trade. That bill, H.R. 3920, increases benefits, training, and health care resources for displaced workers and was approved by the House of Representatives by a 264-157 vote.

"With the United States' trade deficit over \$600 billion and with millions of Americans already suffering the effects of previous trade deals, now is not the time to expand trade preferences," said Rep. Lipinski. "Instead, we must continue to support workers who have lost their jobs due to trade and work to develop a new trade model that protects the environment, respects the rights of workers, and benefits all Americans. If we don't, working families will continue to suffer."