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Export Growth Benefits Illinois Companies
2005 Illinois exports are up over previous year

The Commerce Department's Commercial Service Chicago U.S. Export Assistance Center (USEAC) today released data that shows Illinois exports increased almost 19 percent in 2005 over the previous year, and 18 percent from 2001-2005, to \$36 billion.

"Ninety-five percent of the world's consumers live outside the United States, and more Illinois companies are looking to increase their bottom line by making new sales abroad," said Director Julie Carducci "Exporting helps companies grow and compete, and those that think beyond our borders have a competitive advantage in today's global marketplace."

From 2001-2005, Illinois exports increased to many of the state's top destinations, including Australia (66%), and Belgium (37%), Germany (30%), Mexico (28%), and the United Kingdom (11%). There were a total of 317 export successes made in Illinois during 2005, as a result of the assistance from the Illinois USEACs. Many other Illinois export destinations posted solid gains as well. Machinery manufactures, chemical manufactures, computers and electronic products, and transportation equipment ranked among Illinois' leading exports.

The United States continues working to expand trade and the economic opportunities it creates for all Americans. U.S. free trade agreements with Singapore, Chile, Bahrain, Australia and other countries have reduced or eliminated trade barriers and opened doors for more sales of U.S. goods and services to these countries.

In addition, the recently negotiated Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR), which includes Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic will open more opportunities for American businesses to expand their international sales. In the last five years, export shipments to the CAFTA-DR countries grew at a faster rate than overall U.S. exports.

With its network of offices across the U.S. and in more than 80 countries, the U.S. Commercial Service utilizes its global presence and international marketing expertise to help U.S. companies sell their products and services worldwide. In 2005, the U.S. Commercial Service helped generate nearly 12,500 export successes worth billions of dollars in U.S. export sales.

For information on the Commercial Service, call the Chicago U.S. Export Assistance center at (312) 353-8040, or visit www.export.gov.

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