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Export Growth Benefits Illinois Companies
2006 Illinois exports are up over previous year

The U.S. Commercial Service today announced new Commerce Department data that shows Illinois exports increased almost 17 percent in 2006 over the previous year, and 64 percent from 2002-2006, to \$42 billion.

“Ninety-five percent of the world’s consumers live outside the United States, and more Illinois companies are working to reach these buyers,” said Julie Carducci, Director of the Commercial Service Chicago office. “Exporting helps companies increase their bottom line and those who think global have a competitive advantage in today’s marketplace.”

From 2002-2006, Illinois exports increased to many of the state’s top destinations, including Canada (51 percent), Mexico (62 percent), United Kingdom (42 percent), China (130 percent), and Australia (123 percent). 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.

“Not selling internationally is like leaving money on the table,” said Israel Hernandez, Assistant Secretary for Trade Promotion and Director General of the U.S. Commercial Service. “If you do business here in the United States, the most competitive market in the world, then you can certainly sell your product or service in other markets around the world.”

“We have free trade agreements in force with 14 countries, and several more pending. Last year, U.S. exports to countries where there was an FTA in effect, exceeded \$437 billion, accounting for 42 percent of U.S. exports.” Hernandez continued. “The importance of these agreements to American workers, farmers, businesses and consumers is why the Bush Administration has requested Congress renew the President’s Trade Promotion Authority.”

Trade Promotion Authority (TPA), enacted in 2002, expires June 30 of this year. TPA facilitates free trade agreements with our partners, thus enabling U.S. businesses to meet the foreign competition head-on. With TPA, Congress considers free trade agreements as a whole, rather than subjecting completed agreements to the possibility of changes or amendments.

For information on the Commercial Service, call the Chicago office at (312) 353-8040, or visit www.export.gov.

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