



Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor / Jack Lavin, Director

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Gov. Blagojevich Announces Nearly \$600,000 In Opportunity Returns Funding To Spur Business Expansion And Job Retention In Macoupin County



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OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Rod Blagojevich – Governor

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GOV. BLAGOJEVICH ANNOUNCES NEARLY \$600,000 IN OPPORTUNITY RETURNS FUNDING TO SPUR BUSINESS EXPANSION AND JOB RETENTION IN MACOUPIN COUNTY

CHICAGO – Gov. Rod Blagojevich today announced the awarding of more than **\$581,000** in *Opportunity Returns* grants and credits to Madison Communications, which will allow the telecommunications firm to construct a nearly 40,000 square foot, state-of-the-art office building and warehouse facility in Staunton Township. The expansion project will create 20 new jobs and retain 45 more. The funding comes through Gov. Blagojevich's *Opportunity Returns* program, a historic, regional plan to spur economic growth and create jobs across the Central region and

throughout the state.

"Helping companies like Madison Communications secure its future is vital to fostering widespread business development and laying the foundation for more economic growth throughout the Central region. Providing this support will ensure that an important local company has the facilities it needs to stay competitive and continue providing an essential service to the greater community in Macoupin County," Gov. Blagojevich said.

The majority of the support will come in the form of Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's (DCEO) Economic Development for a Growing Economy (EDGE) program, which extends tax credits over a ten-year period based on job creation projections over the next two years. DCEO will also provide Employer Training Investment Program (ETIP) job training funds that will help enhance the skills of its workforce, and a Business Development Public Infrastructure Program (BDPIP) grant to Staunton Township to make key road improvements that will allow Madison Communications to undertake the much-needed expansion.

"Investments like these in the region that fuel business expansion and help secure good jobs are important to the economic vitality of this area. When it comes to important local projects that really make an economic impact, Gov. Blagojevich continues to show that he will act quickly and aggressively to answer the bell," State Senator Deanna Demuzio (D-Carlinville) said.

"This is a great example of why it is so important to implement an economic development plan that is pro-active instead of reactive. This funding to Staunton Township will enable a critical expansion project to move forward, and that means greater economic security and opportunity for the people of this area," State Representative Gary Hannig (D-Gillespie) said.

(more)

The new business office and warehouse will be constructed on ten acres of property in Macoupin County. The project is expected to be a catalyst to development and growth in Macoupin County.

"We have outgrown our present facilities," said Bob Schwartz, President of Madison Communications. "The excellent support and guidance we've received at the state level from Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and at the local level from Staunton Township has been a critical resource in facilitating our move into the new offices and warehouse that will enable us to keep pace with the growing and more complex needs of the people and communities we serve."

"Staunton Township is elated to receive this grant to assist Madison Communications in the construction of their new facility. Madison Communications continues to be a very successful company and quality employer that positively impacts our local economy. The Township Board and I consider it our duty to do help secure the resources businesses need to stay competitive with the state's assistance, we will be able to ensure that Madison Communications remains a part of our community," said Raymond Spudich, Staunton Township Supervisor.

Madison Communications provides state-of-the-art telecommunication products and services including high speed internet, voice and digital video to twenty-three communities in Macoupin County.

Bond and Madison Counties.

"*Opportunity Returns* is all about making the kinds of strategic investments at the community level that are most critical to strengthening the competitiveness of the local economy and fostering job creation and retention. This funding Gov. Blagojevich is providing addresses a priority of the community and is a great example of an effective grassroots economic development plan at work," DCEO Director Jack Lavin said.

The *Opportunity Returns* regional economic development plan is the most aggressive, comprehensive approach to creating jobs in Illinois' history. Since a one-size-fits-all approach to economic development just doesn't work, the Governor has divided the state into 10 regions - finding areas with common economic strengths and needs, and developing a plan with specific actions for each region. This grassroots effort is a product of significant outreach over several months with business, civic and labor leaders, and elected officials. *Opportunity Returns* contains tangible actions to make each region more accessible, more marketable, more entrepreneurial and more attractive to business.



Madison Communications.12-14-04.doc

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