



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

ROD R. BLAGOJEVICH - GOVERNOR

NEWS

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Gov. Blagojevich signs legislation creating another important online tool for promoting economic development throughout Illinois

SPRINGFIELD – To further ongoing efforts promoting economic development in Illinois, Governor Rod R. Blagojevich today signed legislation requiring the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) to establish and maintain a website devoted to the marketing of Illinois goods and services. The website will link potential purchasers with producers of goods and services located throughout the state. This will compliment other online efforts through *Opportunity Returns*, the Governor's pro-active, regional approach to spurring local economies and creating jobs.

"Everybody understands that e-commerce is an important and growing component of the Illinois economy, and we want to make sure that we're doing all that we can to help Illinois companies sell their wares across the state, the country and the world. This legislation is another step in the right direction because it compliments many of the initiatives that we are already undertaking through *Opportunity Returns*, which is helping to grow our economy and create good jobs," Governor Blagojevich said.

HB 4227 was sponsored Rep. Jim Watson (R-Jacksonville) and Sen. Debbie Halvorson (D-Chicago Heights).

"We must continue to do all that we can to help businesses throughout Illinois continue to grow and prosper. Since e-commerce is such a great way to tap into new and expanding markets, this website will be another important economic development tool for our state," said Rep. Watson.

"Illinois has a wealth of companies, both large and small, who offer a large variety of unique goods and services. One of the most efficient and effective ways to reach new customers is by taking advantage of the expanding online market, and this will be another creative way the state is helping Illinois businesses accomplish that," DCEO Director Jack Lavin said.

Opportunity Returns is already using the Internet in a number of innovative ways to promote economic development throughout Illinois. www.buyillinoisproducts.com, a new website launched earlier this year,

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promotes Illinois food or agricultural producers by giving them a chance to market their company and products online. The “Buy Illinois Products” website, created through the Illinois Department of Agriculture, is designed to keep the agriculture product industry on top of a constantly changing and competitive market.

Location One is an innovative online marketing tool enabling community economic development agencies to promote available properties in their area for business relocation. DCEO’s website now has a listing of community profiles and available real estate sites throughout the state, vastly increasing the community’s exposure to site selectors seeking industrial and commercial real estate opportunities. *Location One* can be found at www.illinoisbiz.biz or www.commerce.state.il.us by clicking on the brown “**Buildings and Sites Locator**” button.

“House Bill 4227 provides yet another tool to help Illinois producers better market their goods and services,” said Halvorson. “An Illinois company that is more productive beyond our borders makes our economy stronger within them.”

HB 4227 is effective January 1, 2005.