



opportunityreturns

Creating more jobs for today and tomorrow

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Rod R. Blagojevich – Governor

news

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GOVERNOR BLAGOJEVICH ANNOUNCES EFFORT TO TRY AND SAVE EMI MANUFACTURING PLANT IN JACKSONVILLE

SPRINGFIELD – Governor Rod Blagojevich announced today that he is directing the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) to work with EMI Manufacturing in Jacksonville in an attempt to avoid its recently announced plant closure. Since 1965, EMI Manufacturing has produced records, cassettes, and, today, CDs and DVDs at its Jacksonville facility. Today, EMI employs more than 430 Central Illinois residents, and is an integral part of Jacksonville's economy.

"For nearly 40 years, the EMI Manufacturing plant in Jacksonville has provided good jobs for the Central region of our state," said Governor Blagojevich. "We owe it to the region's residents to do everything we can to keep Capitol Records in Jacksonville. The goal of *Opportunity Returns* is to create and retain jobs at the local level, and that's exactly what we're trying to do. And if, despite our best efforts, EMI decides to proceed with this plant closure, our Rapid Response Team is already prepared to offer comprehensive job training and assistance to current employees."

Governor Blagojevich is joined by State Senators Vince Demuzio and John Sullivan, as well as State Representatives Rich Myers and Jim Watson in this effort.

"Words cannot express my sadness for the workers and their families over EMI's decision to leave Jacksonville. The community, and its EMI workers, have been loyal and hardworking partners with this company for two generations, and it is my sincerest hope that this decision can be reversed," State Senator Vince Demuzio (D-Carlinville) said.

"We are pulling together to help these families with the potential devastating loss of their jobs – Republicans, Democrats, and all levels of government alike – because there is no room for partisanship at a time like this," said State Representative Jim Watson (R-Jacksonville). "We are working together with the Governor's office, the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, and its Rapid Response Team to come up with a plan to provide assistance to help these displaced workers get back on their feet if EMI closes this facility."

"This is more than just about losing 430 jobs," said Senator John Sullivan (D-Rushville). "The closure of the EMI plant would be a huge loss to our local economy and, as lawmakers, we need to do all we can at this moment to support the hardworking men and women who work there."

(more)

“Having previously served Jacksonville and its surrounding areas, I too feel the pain that the loss of these jobs will mean for the families involved and the entire community,” said State Representative Rich Myers (R-Macomb). “To stop the outsourcing of our jobs to other countries, and even to other states, we must all work together on new ways to attract and keep good jobs here in Illinois.”

Governor Blagojevich’s *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. Developed largely from the input of local business, labor and public sector leaders, *Opportunity Returns* contains tangible, specific actions to make each region more accessible, more marketable, more entrepreneurial and more attractive to businesses. While the Central region’s plan is yet to be announced, the Governor’s office and DCEO is currently working closely with regional leaders to identify top local needs and priorities.

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