



opportunityreturns

Creating more jobs for today and tomorrow

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Rod R. Blagojevich – Governor

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news

CONTACTS:

Cheryle Jackson	312/814.3158 (office)
Abby Ottenhoff	312/814.3158 (office)
Rebecca Rausch	217/782.7355 (office)
Gerardo Cardenas	312/814.3158 (office)
Andrew Ross	312/814.8193 (Opp. Returns)

GOV. BLAGOJEVICH ANNOUNCES FOREIGN TRADE MISSION TO CHINA TO HELP ESTABLISH NEW MARKETS FOR WEST CENTRAL ILLINOIS BUSINESSES

CHICAGO - In an innovative effort to help West Central Illinois businesses establish new markets across the world, Governor Rod Blagojevich today announced that the state would be escorting a delegation of West Central region companies on a foreign trade mission to China. The State of Illinois West Central Region Trade Mission to China, which gets underway Friday and runs through November 17, comes as part of *Opportunity Returns*, the Governor's regional economic development plan designed to create jobs and spur economic growth in the region and throughout the state. This mission will help small to medium size companies explore the vast business opportunities in the Chinese marketplace. The following companies and organizations are participating in the trade mission: Broadcast Electronics Inc., City of Quincy, Farm Pride, Great River Economic Development Foundation, Klingner Associates, International Trade Center at Bradley University, Mid-America Port Commission, Quincy Compressor and Quincy University.

"China has become a highly sophisticated consumer with a set of specialized demands that it is looking to the world to meet. The West Central region is home to many innovative, dynamic companies whose industry expertise and business savvy is already constantly in demand. By leading this trade mission to China, we are facilitating a match between the skills of Illinois companies and the needs of an expanding foreign market. This trip should help forge relationships that will result in tremendous growth opportunities for these businesses today and tomorrow," Governor Blagojevich said.

The Illinois Trade Office (ITO) has pre-qualified decision-makers in China interested in meeting with these Illinois companies, and ITO has already arranged individual meetings with key contacts. In addition, the group will receive in-depth business briefings on local laws governing food and agricultural sectors, in-country market promotion, hospitality and full logistical support. There will also be three Foreign Direct Investment seminars to showcase advantages and benefits of investing in the region that will be held in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, Hong Kong.

"China's accession to the World Trade Organization has led to a great increase in Illinois-China trade, and its WTO commitments have opened important new business opportunities for Illinois companies in a wide variety of important sectors. The delegation of Illinois companies on this trade mission is in a great position to capitalize on those opportunities, and we're really optimistic that this trip is going to play a critical role in helping them do so," DCEO Director Jack Lavin said.

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Quincy Mayor Charles Scholz, who will lead the trade mission, will also establish a sister city relationship between Jia Xing City of Zhejiang Province in China and Quincy.

A recently released national study ranks Illinois fourth in the nation in attracting foreign companies that creates almost 300,000 jobs in the state. The study, entitled “Insourcing Jobs: Making the Global Economy Work for America,” highlights Illinois’ recent growth in foreign investment and job creation. According to the report, U.S. subsidiaries in Illinois now employ 268,400 workers, which represents a nearly 39 percent increase over the last five years. The Washington, DC based Organization for International Investment (OFII) conducted the new report. It can be found at <http://www.ofii.org>.

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.

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