



opportunityreturns

Creating more jobs for today and tomorrow

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Rod R. Blagojevich – Governor

news

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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 \$110,000 IN *OPPORTUNITY RETURNS* FUNDING TO SPARK COMPANY EXPANSION AND JOB CREATION IN LITCHFIELD

CHICAGO - Governor Rod Blagojevich today announced the awarding of **\$110,000** in funding to Worksaver, a farm equipment manufacturer in Litchfield, to help the company build a new 18,000 square foot shipping and warehouse building that will increase its production, distribution and sales. The important project, which will allow Worksaver to create 20 new jobs, comes as a part of the Governor's *Opportunity Returns* program for the Central region – his pro-active, comprehensive plan to promote economic growth and create more jobs throughout the area.

“Today more than ever before, we need to do everything we can to support Illinois manufacturers and ensure that they have all the tools they need to compete and thrive in the global economy. This *Opportunity Returns* funding is a great illustration of that strategy at work because it will allow a small but valued local manufacturer to increase its capacity and continue growing its business. This is a great investment in the vitality of the regional economy,” Governor Blagojevich said.

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) will administer the funding to Worksaver, who will use the grants to help build its new facility and upgrade the skills of its workforce.

“A primary goal of Governor Blagojevich's *Opportunity Returns* plan is to expand opportunities for businesses to grow and thrive. This new 18,000-foot distribution center at Worksaver is certainly a testament to its success. A fortified manufacturing industry means more jobs and job security for workers in the region and a more robust local economy,” State Senator Deanna Demuzio (D-Carlinville) said.

“Like many of our region's companies, Worksaver has built a successful business on the foundation of hardwork and ingenuity. Governor Blagojevich is proving that when those assets are backed with the right combination of human and capital resources, we really unleash the great economic potential of this region,” State Representative Gary Hanning (D-Gillespie) said.

Worksaver Inc. manufactures farm equipment attachments that are generally for small to medium size farmers. The company's diversified product line includes equipment for fencing, hay handling, tillage, seeding, land clearing and other farm chores. Worksaver Inc. markets its products across the United States, Canada, and has some limited sales in Mexico. It has increased its sales from less than \$1 million in 1980 to about \$9.5 million in 2003. Employment has grown from 35 employees in 1981 to 60 today.

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“By making targeted investments at the community level, we can strengthen business, fuel job growth, and make an immediate and tangible impact on the local economy. Under Governor Blagojevich’s leadership, Illinois manufacturers continue to show that they can not only survive in today’s competitive global market, but prosper,” 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.

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