



News from

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Lipinski Announces “Buy American” Victory for Local Manufacturer and Workers

Bedford Park Co. Wins Federal Contract Away from S. Korea After Lipinski Demands DoD Adhere to Buy American Act – Latest Example of Need to Enforce and Strengthen the Act to Save American Jobs

Today, Rep. Dan Lipinski (D-IL) announced that Hoist Liftruck of Bedford Park was awarded a new job-boosting contract by the Defense Department that was slated to be sent to South Korea until he forced the Pentagon to abide by the Buy American Act. Lipinski also called for passage of legislation he has introduced to strengthen the Buy American Act and prevent the federal government from improperly awarding federal contracts to foreign companies in violation of the law.

With Rep. Lipinski’s assistance, Hoist Liftruck won a \$670,000 contract for four 18-ton forklifts that initially was improperly awarded to a South Korean company. One of the last remaining American forklift manufacturers, Hoist is currently hiring additional workers.

“These days it is not often that we have good news to report about an American manufacturer. So as a strong supporter of American manufacturing and local manufacturers, I am very proud to be able to announce today a new \$670,000 U.S. Department of Defense contract for Hoist Liftruck,” Rep. Lipinski stated in his remarks at Hoist. “Buying American is one of the fastest and most effective ways that we can get our economy moving and get Americans back to work. This contract is supporting almost 40 jobs here at Hoist and is contributing to the demand that is spurring Hoist to hire new workers. And it’s not just Hoist and its workers that reap the rewards. Hoist’s supply chain is based heavily in the Midwest, which means that there are a lot of other regional manufacturers that are going to see more business as a result of this contract. This is clearly a victory in the fight against the offshoring of American jobs that has been undermining the middle class and hurting our local communities.”

“Having founded Hoist Liftruck and built it into a U.S. manufacturing stalwart over the last 17 years, I can tell you that this contract is supporting jobs not just at Hoist but at the many other Midwest companies in our supply chain,” Hoist Liftruck President Marty Flaska said. “For us to have lost this contract would have represented a total failure by the federal government to recognize the kind of heavily subsidized and frankly unfair overseas competition we face every day. On behalf of Hoist Liftruck and its employees, I want to thank Congressman Lipinski for standing up for Hoist and American manufacturing.”

“When Marty and Randy came to me last year and told me that a contract had been awarded to a South Korean company that should have gone to them under the rules of the Buy American Act, I was appalled, so I joined with them to take action,” Lipinski recounted. “When I questioned the Pentagon, I got a boilerplate response saying that this contract complied with the Buy American Act. But that claim didn’t hold up to scrutiny, and eventually they were forced to admit that in fact the Buy American Act had been violated. They re-bid the contract and Hoist won.”

Rep. Lipinski has introduced the Buy American Improvement Act, H.R. 2722, to close loopholes in the Buy American Act and stop the rampant practice of awarding government contracts to foreign companies in violation of the Buy American Act. Among other things, the bill would help prevent the government from dividing up a single project into numerous different contracts for the purpose of making them small enough that the Buy American Act does not apply.

Rep. Lipinski also voted against the South Korea Free Trade Agreement negotiated by the Obama administration and passed by Congress last week. Under that agreement, many contracts similar to Hoist's could wind up going to South Korean companies, because in many cases South Korean firms would be treated as if they were American.

In recent years, more than 20 percent of Commerce Department purchases have come from abroad, the Defense Department has waived Buy American rules 44,000 times, and the Treasury Department couldn't find a single domestic producer of office furniture. The situation is probably even worse than is known because agency reporting is so poor.

“The Buy American Improvement Act will create tens of thousands of American jobs by making sure the federal government buys products stamped ‘Made in U.S.A.’ whenever possible,” Rep. Lipinski said. “It’s bad enough that Washington has failed to defend American workers from the unfair trade practices of foreign governments. But for the government to literally put taxpayer money in the pockets of overseas workers is even worse. Washington must recognize what more and more Americans understand: buying American is one of the fastest ways to create jobs and something everyone can do to jumpstart our economy.”

Congressman Lipinski is a longtime advocate for requiring the federal government to Buy American and for strengthening manufacturing. In addition to having introduced the Buy American Improvement Act, he is the author of the bipartisan National Manufacturing Strategy Act, H.R. 1366, which will help revitalize domestic manufacturing, create jobs, and ensure America is able to provide for its own defense without relying on foreign countries. The House passed the bill last year 379-38. His five-point Jobs Plan includes numerous initiatives aimed at revitalizing American manufacturing.

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