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PENCE TELLS COMMERCE SECRETARY: “TIME TO GET TOUGH ON TRADE”

Washington, Sep 17, 2003 - Washington, D.C.— Congressman Mike Pence met today with Commerce Secretary Don Evans and expressed sentiments to the secretary that he repeated on the House floor challenging the administration to address manufacturing job loss by enforcing trade agreements:

“I support free trade in principle, but I am troubled about its practice in America today.

“The state of Indiana has lost more manufacturing jobs than any other state in the Union. Virtually every manufacturer in my eastern Indiana district had shed jobs since this recession began in the latter months of 2000 with one exception, and this week that company announced the elimination of 600 jobs in an entire foundry in central Indiana.

“I just came from a meeting with the Secretary of Commerce Don Evans. I commend the Secretary and the President for the appointment of a new Assistant Secretary of Manufacturing and for establishing an unfair trade practices team.

“It’s time for this administration to focus on enforcement of our trade agreements with special emphasis on China and Mexico - make them be as good as their word, Mr. Speaker.

“And it’s also time to explain to American industry that shifting jobs overseas for short-term profits serves neither them, their shareholders, nor their nation in the long-term.”

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