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Congressman Danny K. Davis (D-IL07) today announced nearly \$15 million in grants to develop and expand innovative strategies to help Americans return to work by delivering services more efficiently, facilitating cooperation across programs and funding streams, and focusing on partnerships with specific employers or industry sectors to develop programs that reflect current and future skill needs.

The Workforce Innovation Fund was created to cultivate and test innovative approaches to workforce training and encourage the replication of evidence-based practices in the workforce development field. Davis stated, "Developing new and creative strategies and expanding existing programs we know work will help make the workforce system more effective to unemployed Americans and employers looking for qualified employees. One of the overarching goals of the Workforce Innovation Fund is to better assess the effectiveness of each workforce strategy, so all grants include an evaluation component. By evaluating projects, the fund will significantly increase the body of knowledge about the most effective strategies in workforce development."

Davis announced two grants for Illinois today: The Chicago Workforce Investment Council, Chicago \$3,000,000 and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity \$11,999,985.

Davis also noted the availability of up to \$20 million through the second round of Workforce Innovation Fund funding – expected to be announced in spring 2013 – to pilot the “Pay for Success” model. This model represents a new way of financing workforce investment projects through which the government only pays for services that achieve measurable results, shifting the risk of investment from the government to the private sector.