

****MEDIA AVAILABILITY****

Senator Richard Lugar Calls for Reform of Costly U.S. Sugar Policy During State-wide “Sweet Jobs” Tour

Hoosiers Invited to Visit Albanese Confectionery to Learn How U.S. Sugar Policy Impacts Small Businesses and Sugar-using Companies Across the State

What: On the next stop of his “Sweet Jobs” tour, Senator Lugar will be available to speak with reporters in person or by phone to answer questions about the Free Sugar Act and discuss the impact of the U.S. sugar program on the state of Indiana.

When: Tuesday, August 30, 2011 at 11:15 a.m. (CDT)

Where: Albanese Confectionery
5441 East Lincoln Highway
Merrillville, IN

**Media
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(Merrillville, IN / Washington, DC) August 26, 2011 – On Tuesday, August 30, the Coalition for Sugar Reform will join Senator Richard Lugar (R-IN) as he continues his state-wide “Sweet Jobs” tour to raise awareness about the need to end the costly U.S. sugar program. Indiana consumers are invited to meet the Senator and learn more about his efforts to put an end to a costly and wasteful sugar tax at Albanese Confectionery (5441 East Lincoln Highway in Merrillville).

“The price of sugar affects food and beverage costs for all Americans, as small businesses and confectioners are forced to raise prices for items such as bread, tomato sauce, peanut butter, and other common foods that contain sugar,” said Senator Lugar. “Every time Hoosiers see sugar listed as an ingredient on their food labels, they should know that are paying more than they should because of the federal government’s sugar policy.”

The current U.S. sugar policy has contributed to the loss of an estimated 112,000 jobs in American sugar-using industries between 1997 and 2009 alone, according to U.S. Department of Commerce data. In fact, the Commerce Department estimated that for every sugar growing job saved through high U.S. sugar prices, approximately three manufacturing jobs are lost. In 2007 alone, Indiana employed more than 18,000 workers in confectionery and other food and beverage manufacturing jobs across the state.

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"The high cost of sugar has a significant impact on small businesses and confectioners across Indiana – and across the country," said Bethany Albanese, Marketing Manager and Retail Store Director for Albanese Confectionery. "Companies like mine are fighting to stay competitive with candy makers outside the U.S. who can buy sugar for nearly half the price. We applaud Senator Lugar's efforts to help protect small businesses against high sugar prices that drive up the price of our products and eliminate thousands of American jobs each year."

Senator Lugar has long advocated for reform of the U.S. sugar program. In March of this year, he championed the effort with his introduction of the "Free Sugar Act." The legislation – which will promote jobs, fight consumer price inflation, and reduce both the budget deficit and the level of government interference in private markets – demonstrates growing bi-partisan Congressional support for reforming a decades-old policy that has sent U.S. sugar prices to an all-time high.

"Sugar producers argue that it's 'no cost' because they don't receive direct payments," continued Sen. Lugar. "Instead, businesses and consumers bear the burden for this welfare system— as much as \$4 billion a year in higher costs, according to a recent estimate."

Hoosiers who would like to help champion U.S. sugar policy reform efforts are encouraged to contact their Member of Congress and urge them to join Senator Lugar in putting an end to "big government's" control of sugar prices by co-sponsoring the Free Sugar Act of 2011 (S. 685, H.R. 1739). A diverse group of fiscal watchdog, private industry, and consumer advocacy groups have endorsed the bill. For more information, visit <http://lugar.senate.gov/issues/ag/>.

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About the Coalition for Sugar Reform

The Coalition for Sugar Reform (www.SugarReform.org) represents consumer, trade, and commerce groups, manufacturing associations, and food and beverage companies that use sugar (including confectioners, bakers, cereal manufacturers, beverage makers and dairy companies), as well as the trade associations for these industries.

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