

# Governor Pritzker Announces Federal Recompete Grant Award Progress For Illinois Communities

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CHICAGO - Governor JB Pritzker today announced that the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) has advanced the city of Decatur as a finalist for a grant to advance employment revitalization. The EDA also announced that the city of Springfield will receive planning dollars to develop a proposal for a similar award. The Distressed Area Recompete Pilot Program, authorized

by the CHIPS and Science Act, targets areas where prime-age (25-54 years) employment is significantly lower than the national average, with the goal to close this gap through flexible, locally driven investments.

“The CHIPS Act and the Biden-Harris Administration continue to open doors for Illinois working families,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “The Recompete Plan will help ensure economic development impacts *every* community, including those who have historically faced barriers to employment. The Springfield Economic Empowerment Project exemplifies that spirit, and I am so grateful to the Biden-Harris Administration for investing in our capital city and allowing Illinois residents to create the future they deserve. I’m also pleased that Decatur and Richland Community College have been recognized as finalists for the funding, and I look forward to championing their program in years to come.”

The Springfield Economic Empowerment Project, led by the city of Springfield, will leverage the grant to increase local coordination and planning activities to create and connect workers to good jobs in geographically diverse and persistently distressed communities. The EDA has awarded additional planning dollars to the project to further develop a proposal.

The Decatur, Illinois' Recompete Plan, led by Richland Community College, seeks to address key causes of unemployment among underserved populations in the city. The plan proposes to scale the EnRICH training model to prepare workers for manufacturing job opportunities in the emerging electric vehicle and precision fermentation sectors.

Earning the title of Recompete Finalist is an endorsement of the community’s strategy to create and connect workers to good jobs in geographically diverse and persistently distressed communities across the country. Recompete Finalists are now eligible to apply for the final phase of the Recompete Program, which will award an average of \$20 to \$50 million in implementation funding. Decatur was selected as one of 22 finalists out of 565 applicants.

“Recompete helps fulfill President Biden’s promise that no community in America will be left behind as we continue to grow our nation’s economy and invest in American workers,” said U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo. “These Recompete grant recipients have presented a wide range of inspiring solutions to create jobs, develop long-term economic growth, and realize the full potential in communities that for too long have been overlooked or counted out.”

“As President Biden has said many times: we all just want a fair shot. Recompete helps make it possible for more Americans in more communities to find a good-paying job that puts them and their families on the path toward success. By equitably investing in

new job creation opportunities across America, we can help fulfil our promise that no American, and no community, is ever left behind,” said Deputy Secretary of Commerce Don Graves.

“We’re in the midst of a manufacturing resurgence in Illinois, but we still need to ensure the benefits are shared and help lift all communities, including those in Central Illinois,” U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) said. “Illinois is home to large numbers of skilled workers who are ready, willing and able to work in emerging industries, and these Recompete plans in Decatur and Springfield can help ensure this growth helps all Illinoisans have a chance to succeed.”

“The EDA’s Recompete Pilot Program channels resources into the heart of economically distressed communities that have been overlooked for far too long,” said U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL). “By strategically investing in these areas, we not only breathe new life into local economies, but also forge pathways to quality employment, fostering a brighter future for the residents who call Springfield and Decatur home.”

“Innovate Illinois salutes leaders in Decatur and Springfield as they work to foster economic expansion and equitable growth in central Illinois,” said Innovate Illinois Vice Chair and UL Solutions President and CEO Jenny Scanlon. “Grants from the EDA Recompete program will help boost regional innovation, job growth, and Illinois’ growing reputation as a national tech leader.”

"The EDA Recompete Pilot program envisioned by the Biden-Harris administration aligns with the public engagement commitment of our university to transition distressed communities and their marginalized populations to prosperity." said Chancellor Robert J. Jones, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. "I'm so proud of our central Illinois community colleges, the Illinois Innovation Network, and Innovate Illinois for their strategic partnerships and dedication to empower communities and their workforces for sustained economic development."

For a full list of Recompete Finalists, visit [eda.gov/recompete](https://eda.gov/recompete).