

*March 2, 2010*

We've been hearing a lot from the experts lately that the economy's turning around. That's certainly welcome news.

But if you're still one of the millions of Americans out of a job, indexes and trends don't mean a whole lot.

What we need, as a country, is to focus on getting Americans back to work, and there's no place where that's more evident than in Georgia's 12th Congressional District.

I spent the District Work Period last month touring 14 companies doing business in Georgia's 12th District, representing over 12,500 employees. I visited with the folks who are working in those factories, and with the folks who are running those businesses.

And they're on to something.

When a business sets up shop in a community in Georgia's 12th District, they get access to the best workers in the world. There's no doubt that Americans can get the job done, and get the job done right. American workers are loyal and hardworking, and that's what business needs right now. The communities benefit, too.

More jobs means bigger payrolls, and bigger payrolls mean more jobs.

What I saw on my tour was the best of these relationships: companies that treat their employees well, and employees who turn in produce excellent work.

The question is, how can we make this happen in more communities with more companies?

From talking to folks who run these businesses, the answer is that the government needs to make it easier for them to come to American towns and stay here. Trade is important, but so is making sure that our goods are made by our people as much as possible.

We should incentivize corporations to create jobs that stick around for the long haul, and that's what's really going to get us out of the hole we're in.

Right now, trade policy, tax policy, and a regulatory system that only regulates American manufacturers and not foreign manufacturers, all work to encourage manufacturers to take their jobs overseas. We need to reverse each of these trends.

President Obama was just in Savannah talking about what we need to do about turning the economy around and getting folks back to work. I think the Home Star program he announced during that visit is a great start, and it will do a lot of good right here at home.

Along with listening to our successful local companies, programs like this are going to put us on the right track.

That's why I hope my colleagues in Washington will join me in making sure that this is the year we help American businesses create American jobs. It works where it happens, and we need more of it.