

Ambassador Highlights Importance of Strong Trade with Mexico

U.S. Ambassador to Mexico E. Anthony Wayne discussed the importance of a strong trade relationship with Mexico at the California Chamber of Commerce International Breakfast forum on March 30.

Wayne and the Consul General of Mexico Carlos Gutierrez, who also attended the forum, joined legislators from all U.S. border states for the Border Legislative Council Conference at the State Capitol earlier in the week.

Goal to Increase Exports

During his talk, Wayne highlighted President Barack Obama's 2010 National Export Initiative, which aims to help businesses double exports over five years.

This is a goal that the federal government cannot do, unless it works with "state governments, municipal governments, and, very importantly, with the private sector and with organizations like the California Chamber of Commerce," Wayne emphasized.

The Ambassador also praised the work that chambers of commerce do as being vital for the future of the United States.

"We see all that you all do as essential, especially from our international perspective as we're looking to both generate more exports, also attract investment from overseas, and building this economy that is so important for us, for our children, for our partners around the world," Wayne said.

U.S.-Mexico Relationship

The ambassador commented that after the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), trade with Mexico has tripled, making Mexico the United States' third largest exporter and the United States Mexico's No. 1 trading partner. Moreover, the two countries' relationship is tightly intertwined.

"It's a relationship that's based on a lot more than dollars and pesos," Wayne said. "It's in the concept of partnership. It's not that we just trade with each other, we actually build things together."

The ambassador pointed out that 75% of Mexican manufacturing factories (maquiladoras) are located along the border and import more than 80% of their imports from the United States. Forty cents of every dollar of Mexican exports is imported from the United States, Wayne said.

"It's a different type of relationship



U.S. Ambassador to Mexico E. Anthony Wayne commends the role of the private sector in trade and transnational efforts at a CalChamber International Breakfast forum on March 30.

than that of other countries," he said. "In fact, if you sit down and think about it, this relationship is probably the relationship that touches the daily lives of more Americans than any other relationship that we have."

Reforms

One of the hindrances to trade within the NAFTA countries is differing regulations, which the ambassador said is being tackled by the three countries. Trilateral regulatory cooperation was

one of the issues to be addressed when President Obama hosted the prime minister of Canada and the president of Mexico on April 2, Wayne said.

Also, the United States is working closely with Mexico to tackle some of the major issues Mexico is facing, such as intellectual property rights protection, food safety, e-health, oil and gas, conformity and assessment, and nanotechnology, among other issues.

The country is especially lending aid to Mexico in the area of security, such as combating organized crime, reforming aspects of the legal system, creating a more efficient and secure border system, and promoting a culture of lawfulness, Wayne added.

California-Mexico Trade

Mexico continues to be California's No. 1 export market. California exports to Mexico totaled \$26 billion in 2011. Mexico purchases 16% of all California exports.

California's exports to Mexico are driven by computers and transportation equipment, which account for 43% of all California exports to Mexico.

More Information

For more information about California-Mexico trade, check out the Trading Partner Portal in the international section of the CalChamber website at www.calchamber.com/Mexico.
Staff Contact: Susanne Stirling

CalChamber Health Policy Committee Seeks Input from HR/Employee Benefits Managers

The California Chamber of Commerce has been a leading voice regarding the impact of health care policy on employers. The CalChamber Health Care Policy Committee reviews and evaluates health care public policy proposals for their financial and administrative impact on employers.

CalChamber members interested in joining the committee's efforts to protect California businesses against expensive and burdensome health care coverage costs, and to identify and support innovative and cost-effective strategies

to deliver health care in California, are invited to join the CalChamber Health Care Policy Committee.

Members' expertise in dealing with the delivery of employee health care benefits can enhance CalChamber efforts to understand the impact of proposed legislation.

The next committee meeting is April 26. To express interest in joining the committee or for further information, contact jedd.hampton@calchamber.com or call (916) 444-6670.