

Sister State Agreement

Between the State of Maryland, USA and Harju County, Estonia

Harju County of Estonia and the State of Maryland of the United States of America (hereinafter the signatories), desiring to strengthen the social and economic relationships between our people and recognizing the mutual benefits of international cooperation and trade, hereby establish this Sister State Agreement.

Maryland and Estonia have each enjoyed beneficial relationships since the forging of the State Partnership Program between the Maryland National Guard and the Estonian Home Guard (Kaitseliit) in the early 1990's. Benefits to both have also come from educational exchange programs, business contacts and the Sister City agreements between many cities in both locations, especially between Annapolis, the capital of Maryland, and Tallinn, the county seat of Harju County and the capital of Estonia.

The signatories will explore opportunities to cultivate greater understanding of each other, raise cross-cultural awareness as well as develop interactions and programs that build long-term cooperation between Maryland and Harju County, Estonia.

Within this agreement, both the State of Maryland and Harju County, Estonia agree that a Maryland-Estonia Sister State Executive Committee will be established in both regions to administer this relationship and a permanent member of the respective Committee shall chair each.

The signatories will work together towards sharing information and expertise in, but not limited to, educational, cultural, political, economic development and health care exchanges between Maryland and Harju County. They will also investigate the possibilities of joint research programs in the academic, business and public sector areas and sponsor reciprocal visits and events.


The signatories will facilitate direct links between local authorities in the State of Maryland and Harju County, and examine ways to encourage and expand relationships between both communities and nations.

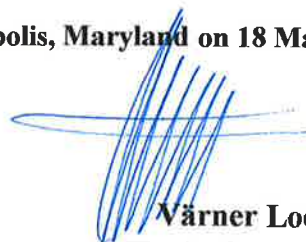
The signatories will initiate and expand cooperative efforts by seeking to identify appropriate areas for collaboration, and in all spheres of mutual interest, work for the benefit and well-being of their respective citizenry.

This agreement is executed in English and Estonian languages, both text being authentic.

Remembering that, in the 13th Century, Estonia was also known as "Terra Mariae" or Mary's Land, it is fitting that in the 21st Century the State of Maryland and Harju County, representing Estonia, sign this agreement.

Signed in the spirit of friendship and cooperation in Annapolis, Maryland on 18 May 2009.


Martin O'Malley
Governor of Maryland


Värner Lootsmann
Harju County Governor