

Governor's Subcabinet for International Affairs

2024 Annual Report to the Governor

Submitted by:
Susan C. Lee
Secretary of State
January 2025

Table of Contents

Introduction.....1

 2024 Membership..... 3

 2024 Countries Engaged..... 6

2024 Key Collaborative Engagements.....8

2024 Strategic Goal Highlights, by Agency 26

Looking Ahead to 2025..... 44

 Agency Goals for 2025..... 44

Conclusion 52

Appendix..... 53

 Comprehensive Strategic Goal Activities in 2024 53

 Strategic Goal 1:..... 53

 Strategic Goal 2:..... 54

 Strategic Goal 3:..... 79

 Strategic Goal 4:..... 87

 Strategic Goal 5:..... 94

 Strategic Goal 6:..... 106

 Executive Order 01.01.2024.33 114

Introduction

Achieving Progress in International Affairs: A Year in Review

In 2024, the Governor’s Subcabinet for International Affairs, chaired by Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, achieved remarkable progress in advancing the Moore-Miller Administration's international priorities outlined in the *2023-2027 Moore-Miller Administration Strategic Plan for International Affairs*. By leveraging the strengths of our diverse member agencies, the Subcabinet for International Affairs cultivated meaningful relationships with international partners in 61 countries, advancing shared goals while promoting Maryland’s leadership on the global stage. This Report highlights the Subcabinet’s accomplishments in 2024 and the critical role of cross-agency teamwork in achieving them.



Governor Wes Moore signs Executive Order 01.01.2024.33 with Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and staff

Governor Wes Moore’s issuance of Executive Order 01.01.2024.33 on September 30 underscores the Administration’s focus on ensuring the effective, well-organized functioning of the Subcabinet. The Executive Order modernizes the Subcabinet’s mission to meet evolving global challenges and expands its membership to include the Maryland Military Department. This expansion has brought critical expertise to the table, strengthening the Subcabinet’s ability to address complex issues and seize emerging opportunities.

As you delve into this Report beyond the highlights, you will find a detailed account of the Subcabinet’s achievements and activities in 2024. This detailed account is made possible by the sustained commitment and engagement of the Subcabinet members and their Staff Working Group representatives, whose collaborative efforts reflect a shared commitment to the Administration’s goals and values of “Governing through Partnership” and “Cross-Agency Collaboration”.

The Subcabinet’s collective efforts not only underline its dedication to the Administration's priorities but also provide the foundation to take Maryland’s international relations to a higher level in the coming years. By uniting the expertise and resources of our members, the Subcabinet is effectuating the Administration’s

strategic goals and is making continued progress in addressing global challenges with the main focus of delivering results to the people of Maryland.



Subcabinet for International Affairs Quarterly Meeting, October 2024. Left to right: Secretary of the Maryland Higher Education Commission Dr. Sanjay Rai, Secretary of Environment Serena McIlwain, Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, Lt. Governor Aruna Miller, Assistant Chief of Staff Andy Parker, and Director of the Governor's Office of Homeland Security Travis Nelson

2024 Membership



Secretary of State (Chair)

Susan C. Lee

Supported by:

- *Alexandria Liu, Special Assistant for Intergovernmental Relations*
- *Mary E. (Mendy) Nitsch, Director of International Affairs*
- *Joseph Gebhardt, Senior Advisor*
- *Michael Lore, Deputy Secretary of State*
- *Cathy Bauer, Executive Assistant*
- *Rosanna Mantova, Assistant Director of International Affairs*



Lieutenant Governor

Aruna Miller

Staff Working Group Member:

Leah Woody

Special Assistant to the Lieutenant Governor



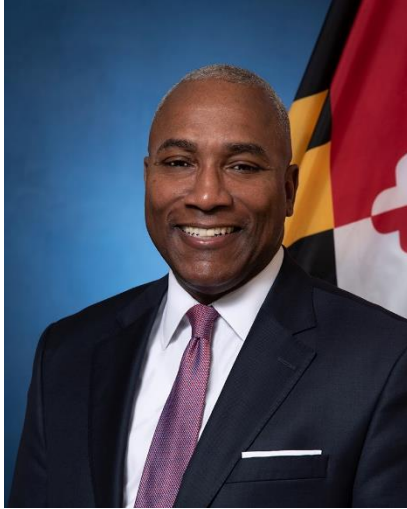
Department of Agriculture

Secretary Kevin M. Atticks

Staff Working Group Member:

Stone Slade

Director of International Marketing



**Department of Commerce
Secretary Kevin Anderson**

*Staff Working Group Member:
Jessica Reynolds
Senior Director, Office of International Investment and Trade*



**Department of the Environment
Secretary Serena McIlwain**

*Staff Working Group Member:
Rachel Lamb, Ph.D.
Senior Climate Advisor*



**Maryland Higher Education Commission
Secretary Dr. Sanjay Rai**

*Staff Working Group Members:
Elena Quiroz-Livanis
Deputy Secretary*

*Derrick Coley
Executive Director of External Relations*

*Kristin Clarkson
Director of Communications*



**Department of Transportation
Secretary Paul J. Wiedefeld**

*Staff Working Group Member:
Lyn Farrow
Director of External Affairs*

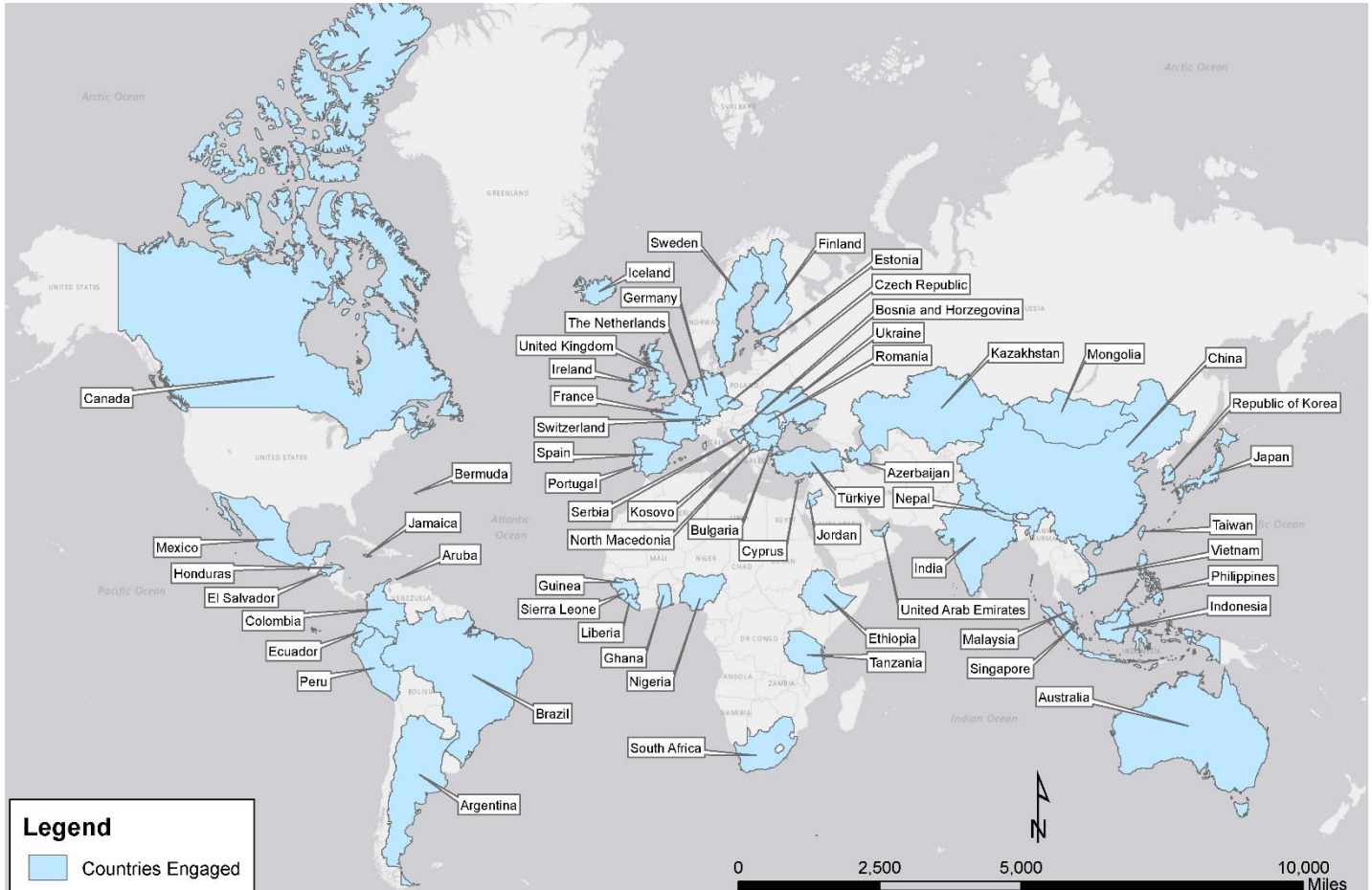


**Maryland Military Department
Major General Janeen L. Birkhead, Adjutant General**

*Staff Working Group Members:
Tony Campbell, Ph.D.
Director of Legislative Affairs*

*Major Jason Booth
Director of the State Partnership Program*

2024 Countries Engaged



Map of Countries Engaged by Subcabinet Members in 2024, made with assistance from the Maryland Department of Environment

Office of the Secretary of State

- Africa: Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and South Africa
- Asia: Azerbaijan, China, Japan, Jordan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, Türkiye, Vietnam, and Australia
- Europe: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Kosovo, The Netherlands, North Macedonia, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and Ukraine
- North & South Americas: Aruba, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, and Peru
- Middle East: Türkiye
- Multinational Organizations: NATO member countries, European Union Delegation

Lieutenant Governor

- Asia: China, Republic of Korea, and Australia
- Middle East: Türkiye

- North & South Americas: Canada

Department of Agriculture

- Asia: China, India, Indonesia, Japan, and Philippines
- Europe: France and Ireland
- North & South Americas: Mexico

Department of Commerce

- Africa: Nigeria and Tanzania
- Asia: China, Japan, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, Vietnam, India, and Australia
- Europe: Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, The Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, and United Kingdom
- Middle East: Israel, Türkiye, Jordan and United Arab Emirates
- North & South Americas: Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Peru, and Colombia

Department of the Environment

- Africa: South Africa
- Asia: Azerbaijan and China
- Europe: Sweden
- North & South Americas: Brazil and Canada

Maryland Higher Education Commission

- Asia: China, India, and Japan
- Europe: France

Department of Transportation

- Asia: Japan, Kazakhstan, and Vietnam
- Europe: Iceland, Kosovo, North Macedonia, and Serbia
- North & South Americas: Aruba, Bermuda, Canada, and Jamaica

Maryland Military Department

- Europe: Estonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Portugal
- Africa: Morocco, Tunisia, Ghana, and Senegal

2024 Key Collaborative Engagements

With high levels of participation and communication throughout the year, the Subcabinet for International Affairs was able to make significant progress on all of its Strategic Goals in 2024. The following are highlights of the Subcabinet's achievements made through its collaborative efforts:

1. King Abdullah II of Jordan Visit

In September, His Majesty King Abdullah II of Jordan made an official visit to Maryland to meet with Governor Wes Moore for a private one-on-one meeting, followed by a roundtable with Maryland CEOs and executives. The King's visit marked the first official visit of a foreign head of state to the Maryland State House.

During the visit, the King highlighted investment and trade opportunities in Jordan, and Governor Wes Moore showcased Maryland's economic diversity and opportunities for bilateral trade and investment. The King discussed ongoing efforts to modernize Jordan's economy, and networked with key executives of Maryland businesses in the sectors of manufacturing, healthcare, biotechnology, engineering, higher education, and research. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and Secretary of Commerce Kevin A. Anderson also participated in the discussions.



King Abdullah II of Jordan visits Governor Wes Moore in Annapolis, Maryland. From left to right: Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, H.E. Alaa Batayneh, His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, Governor Wes Moore, COS Fagan Harris, H.E. Ambassador Dina Kavar, and Secretary of Commerce Kevin A. Anderson

2. Rebuilding the Francis Scott Key Bridge

In response to the sudden, devastating collapse of the Francis Scott Key (FSK) Bridge in March 2024, which tragically claimed the lives of six workers, disrupted Port of Baltimore and the livelihoods of port workers, and deeply impacted the surrounding community, Maryland has worked closely with various stakeholders, including international partners, to address the rebuilding efforts. In the days following the Bridge's collapse, the State of Maryland received an outpouring of support from 26 foreign leaders, including those from Maryland's Sister States around the world and the diplomatic community in Washington, DC. Members of the Subcabinet for International Affairs contributed their agency's resources in response to this tragic event. As of December 2024, the State of Maryland, led by Governor Wes Moore and in partnership with the U.S. Congress, has secured full federal funding for the rebuilding of the Key Bridge.

Recognizing the importance of global collaboration, Lt. Governor Aruna Miller, a transportation engineer and chair of the FSK Bridge Intergovernmental Economic Response Team, visited the Gordie Howe International Bridge in July. This bridge, currently under construction, spans the Detroit River between Detroit, Michigan and Windsor, Ontario, Canada, and will be the longest cable-stayed bridge in North America upon completion. During the visit, Lt. Governor Aruna Miller met with officials from the Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority, which oversees the estimated \$4.7 billion construction and future operation of the Gordie Howe Bridge, which is being financed primarily by the Canadian government through a 36-year Design-Build-Finance-Operate-Maintain concession. Valuable information was gleaned from this visit, providing a model as Maryland works to rebuild the Key Bridge.



Lt. Governor Aruna Miller visits the Gordie Howe International Bridge connecting the U.S. and Canada

This cross-border collaboration underscores the critical role of international partnerships and knowledge-sharing in the rebuilding process. Maryland's rebuilding efforts are strengthened by the ongoing support of global stakeholders, reaffirming the shared commitment to rebuilding infrastructure, ensuring safety, and fostering long-term resilience.

Additionally, Higher Education Secretary Dr. Sanjay Rai and Secretary of Transportation Paul J. Wiedefeld met to discuss how the higher education segment could provide meaningful input into the Key Bridge redevelopment discussion.

3. Relationship with Japan

In 2024, the Subcabinet for International Affairs engaged in several key exchanges with Japan, emphasizing Maryland's agricultural, seafood, life sciences and educational strengths while reinforcing the Maryland-Japan partnership.

Notably, Ambassador of Japan to the United States Shigeo Yamada hosted at his residence a Japan-Maryland Reception in March, featuring remarks from Ambassador Yamada, Governor Wes Moore, Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, and Congressman David Trone, which reaffirmed the importance of the Maryland-Japan relationship and the Maryland-Kanagawa Sister State relationship. This event was attended by members of the Subcabinet for International Affairs, including Secretary of State Lee, Secretary of Agriculture Atticks, Secretary of Commerce Anderson, and Secretary of the Environment McIlwain, who helped promote Maryland's agriculture and seafood products. A more intimate event was held in August, when a dinner showcasing Maryland's premium seafood, including Ike Jime-prepared fish and blue catfish, was hosted by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and the Embassy of Japan, and included participation from seafood buyers as well as Secretary of State Lee, Secretary of Agriculture Atticks, and Secretary of Commerce Anderson. This was a successful event to engage Maryland stakeholders with the Ike Jime method, which would better position Maryland seafood as a premium product for domestic and export markets.



Ambassador Shigeo Yamada and Governor Wes Moore at the 2024 Japan-Maryland Reception



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and staff with Ambassador of Japan to the U.S. Shigeo Yamada at the U.S. – Japan Tourism Reception

Other Japan-related engagements included the sharing of information and best practices of the Maryland Secretary of State's Address Confidentiality Program with the Japan Local Government Center and highlighting Maryland's unique program protecting victims of domestic violence. Additionally, Secretary of State Lee and Higher Education Secretary Dr. Rai received two student exchange groups from Kanagawa, where they discussed with students their career paths, the U.S. educational system, and opportunities for studying in Maryland. Also, Maryland Transportation Authority Police hosted a Japanese delegation to share best practices in technology used by law enforcement. The Maryland Department of Commerce confirmed the participation of two business incubators in Kanagawa, Japan in the Maryland Soft Landing Exchange Program which launched in fall 2023.

There were various interactions with Japan over the course of the SelectUSA Summit. The Maryland Department of Commerce welcomed representatives from the Embassy of Japan to the Maryland Spin-Off event, and Commerce leadership also met with JETRO at the Summit. Secretary of State Lee attended the Japanese Embassy's SelectUSA reception in May.

4. Relationship with the Republic of Korea

In 2024, the Subcabinet for International Affairs strengthened its engagements with the Republic of Korea (South Korea), particularly in trade, aerospace and space technology, education, and diplomatic exchange.



Governor Wes Moore meets with Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the U.S. Cho Hyun-dong

Governor Wes Moore met with South Korea's Ambassador Cho Hyun-dong at the Maryland State House. During their discussion, the Governor reflected on his experience in South Korea as a young Army soldier. The meeting focused on the robust economic ties between Maryland and South Korea, with Ambassador Cho highlighting the presence of at least 30 South Korean companies in the state. The Ambassador also extended an invitation for Governor Wes Moore to visit South Korea in the future. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and Consul General Cho Kijoung were in attendance.

The Department of Commerce met with key partners to advance business relationships in South Korea, such as the Korea Trade Promotion Corporation (KOTRA), Korean American Professional Association in Life Sciences (KAPAL), and the Korean American Professional Association of Life Sciences, promoting Maryland as a place to invest and do business with these organizations. The Department of Transportation hosted a delegation from the Incheon Metropolitan Council, South Korea to discuss port operations and best management practices.

The Office of the Secretary of State continued to nurture Maryland's two Sister State relationships in South Korea, working on initiatives like Maryland's participation in the upcoming Jeollanamdo International Agricultural Exhibition in 2025. Additionally, the Office supported Maryland's connection with Gyeongnam Province by attending Towson University's graduation ceremony for international students, many of whom hailed from Gyeongnam. Towson University also expressed interest in expanding its student exchange programs, further enhancing educational ties between Maryland and South Korea.



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and Montgomery County Representatives with the Mayor of Daejeon Lee Jang Woo

The Office of the Secretary of State assisted the Lt. Governor's Office with coordinating a reception with Maryland's Korean American community leaders to commemorate Governor Wes Moore's proclamation of Korean American Day in the State. In its 20th year, this reception continues a bipartisan tradition through four (4) gubernatorial administrations to recognize the contributions of Maryland's Korean American community and proclaim January 13th as Korean American Day in Maryland. (It is also recognized at the federal level.) Attendees included the Consul General of the Korean Embassy who provided remarks of appreciation for Governor Wes Moore and Lt. Governor Aruna Miller's leadership, Chief Judge Chung Pak, Korean American members of the Governor's APA Commission, members of the Korean American media, the co-chairs of the Maryland-Korea Sister State Committee and representatives of the Korean War Veterans association. Lt. Governor Aruna Miller was the recipient of an award presented by the Korea Information Association recognizing her support of immigrant communities and the Korean American community. The award was made of the barbed wire fence and shell casings between North and South Korea.

Secretary of State Susan C. Lee represented the Moore-Miller Administration in May at the Korean Embassy's SelectUSA reception entitled U.S.-Korea Networking Reception: Building Synergy Through Strategic Partnership. This was one of several embassy receptions that Secretary Lee and/or her staff attended during SelectUSA., taking advantage of the fact that this major U.S. Department of Commerce trade show brings thousands of current and potential international investors to the Maryland/D.C. region annually.

5. Relationship with China

In 2024, Maryland advanced its economic opportunities with China through strategic engagement across key sectors, including life sciences, agriculture, student exchange, and environmental sustainability. This progress built on the momentum from high-level meetings such as the November 2023 discussions between Presidents Joe Biden and Xi Jinping, and Vice Governor Sun Yong's visit from Sister State Anhui Province to Maryland in December 2023. Maryland's cross-agency collaboration focused on leveraging mutual interests and securing economic gains, underscoring the State's leadership in sustainable development and business growth in a key market.



Secretary of Environment Serena McIlwain and Senior Climate Advisor Dr. Rachel Lamb meet with the National Development and Reform Commission in Beijing, China

A central initiative was Maryland's focus on climate cooperation. Secretary of the Environment Serena McIlwain participated in two high-level U.S.-China climate delegations in Beijing, China and Berkeley, California, including one led by John Podesta, Senior Advisor on Climate to President Joe Biden. During her travels, Secretary of the Environment McIlwain worked to advance climate cooperation between the two countries, and advanced conversations with two biogas and solar companies interested in doing business in Maryland. The Office of the Secretary of State, Department of Commerce, and Department of the Environment had discussions throughout the year with China-based companies involved in electric vehicle manufacturing and energy technologies, underscoring Maryland's role as a hub for green technology investment, aligning with the State's broader sustainability goals.

Simultaneously, Maryland worked on expanding its broader economic and business ties with China. Multiple high-level meetings were held in Maryland between Subcabinet members and visiting Chinese representatives, with active engagement from Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, Secretary of Agriculture Kevin M. Atticks, Secretary of Commerce Kevin A. Anderson, Secretary of the Environment Serena McIlwain, and Higher Education Secretary Dr. Sanjay Rai. In December 2024, Minister Qiu Wenxing from the Chinese Embassy met with Secretary of State Lee to discuss enhancing Maryland-China relations, including plans for a Maryland delegation visit to China in 2025 with the support of the Embassy and local governments. Additional high-level Maryland-China engagements in 2024 included Maryland's hosting of prominent trade body China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT), overseen by China's Ministry of Commerce, by Secretary of State Lee, Secretary of Agriculture Atticks, Secretary of the Environment McIlwain, and Department of Commerce representatives, during which the expansion of bilateral trade, particularly in environmental technologies, agriculture, and education exchanges was discussed. Additionally, Secretary of State Lee in collaboration with Secretary of Agriculture Atticks and Secretary of Commerce Anderson hosted a summit between high-level representatives of 32 China-based companies interested in expanding their businesses to Maryland, showcasing opportunities for investment, particularly in environmental sustainability, life sciences, agriculture, and student exchanges, in Maryland.



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee commemorating the 45th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations between the United States and China with officials from Washington, D.C. and the Embassy of the People's Republic of China, and Chinese-American community leaders (from left to right: Sheriff Maxwell C. Uy, Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, Minister Qiu Wenxing, Mr. Qili Li, and Consul General Zhu Di)



Department of Agriculture Director of International Marketing, Stone Slade, met with USDA Foreign Agriculture Service representatives during the Southern U.S. Trade Association's outbound trade mission to China and Hong Kong

Two significant trade delegations from Maryland traveled to China last year. In the summer, the Department of Agriculture led a trade mission to China and Hong Kong during which Maryland-based food companies met with prequalified buyers and importers. In the fall, the Department of Commerce led a trade mission to China during which Maryland's inaugural participation at the China International Import Expo (CIIE) was executed, FDI meetings were conducted, and eight Maryland companies made valuable gains in the China market. During CIIE, the Department of Commerce participated in speaking opportunities during the show to showcase the Maryland "brand" as one of the most dynamic industry clusters in Life Science and Biotech, agriculture/foods, cleantech, logistics, etc. in the USA.

It is important to note that 2025 will mark the 45th anniversary of the Maryland-Anhui Sister State relationship. Founded in 1980, this relationship was the first U.S.-China Sister State relationship and Maryland's first Sister State relationship.

6. Relationship with France

In 2024, Maryland continued to strengthen its partnership with Hauts-de-France, its Sister State in France since 2020, through initiatives focused on education exchanges and agriculture. This was a priority of Lt. Governor Aruna Miller for this year.

The Department of Agriculture and the Office of the Secretary of State (OSOS) facilitated several educational exchanges, including hosting students and faculty from Bourbourg UFA, an agricultural training school in Hauts-de-France, who visited Maryland's farms and agricultural operations to gain insight into local farming practices and fostering international collaboration in the agricultural sector. Additionally, the Office of the Secretary of State engaged with Hauts-de-France officials to support the exchanges between Glenelg Country School and Sacré Coeur High School in Péronne and between Worcester Technical High School and Lycée Hôtelier International in Lille. The Maryland Higher Education Commission and Department of Commerce have participated in several of the monthly calls between the Office of the Secretary of State and its counterparts in Hauts-de-France as well.



The Department of Agriculture and the Office of the Secretary of State facilitated several educational exchanges, including hosting students and faculty from Bourbourg UFA (Université Franco-Américaine)

Collaborations in the horse industry also featured prominently in Maryland's collaboration with Hauts-de-France, including virtual meetings between representatives of both regions' horse industry boards, facilitated by the Department of Agriculture and the Office of the Secretary of State. These talks centered on exchange opportunities in equestrian education and rider programs, including information on the Maryland schools which provide equestrian programs, the Maryland Thoroughbred Career Program, and statistics on Maryland's horse industry, with potential for Maryland equestrian professionals and amateurs to visit Hauts-de-France and vice versa. Planning for a Hauts-de-France delegation in 2025 has begun, expected to coincide with major international equestrian events such as the Washington International Horse Show and Maryland 5 Star at Fair Hill during Maryland Horse Month in October.

Additional efforts to expand the Maryland-Hauts-de-France relationship included discussions about the Societe des Amies Versailles MOU signed in 2022, which provides Maryland organizations with access to the Palace of Versailles for events and meetings. Department of Commerce also engaged Haut-de-France by confirming the incubator EuroTechnologies, based in Lille, as part of the Maryland Soft Landing Exchange launch in fall 2024.

7. Advancing Cybersecurity, Artificial Intelligence and Quantum Computing

In 2024, the Subcabinet for International Affairs continued to strengthen and broaden Maryland's global cybersecurity collaborations, reinforcing its position as a leader in emerging technologies and defense strategies for the public and private sectors.



Lt. Governor Aruna Miller visiting the Quantum World Congress

Lt. Governor Aruna Miller emphasized Maryland's leadership in quantum computing during her visit to the University of Maryland's QLab and her remarks at the Quantum World Congress. This global conference, which attracts participants from over 20 countries and included participation by Department of Commerce representatives, provided a platform to showcase Maryland's advancements in quantum technology and its application to cybersecurity. Lt. Governor Aruna Miller also underscored her commitment to making STEM fields, including quantum computing, more accessible to women and underrepresented groups. She also highlighted the IONQ Lab located in College Park, Maryland, which was recently identified as the epicenter of quantum computing and provides unmatched opportunities for students and researchers to have hands-on experience with commercial-grade quantum computing technology and experts in the field.

In 2024, Maryland made significant strides in engaging the global cybersecurity and quantum computing industries. The Department of Commerce led a business delegation to *InfoSecurity Europe*, Europe's leading cybersecurity trade show, where Commerce staff engaged with over 30 prospective investors and supported seven Maryland companies in expanding their growth into the European market. This was part of a broader strategy to position Maryland as a global leader in cybersecurity technologies. Additionally, Commerce and the Maryland Department of the Environment met with the Sweden-U.S. Green Transition Initiative to learn more about the existing technologies that Swedish companies have to support AI and data centers with energy storage and green energy solutions. Additionally, the Office of the Secretary of State met with representatives from Taiwan's high-tech industries, and discussed Maryland's growing prominence in quantum computing, particularly in areas linked to national security and life sciences.

The role of international student exchange to advance Maryland's cybersecurity and quantum computing industry was featured in 2024 as well. Governor Wes Moore highlighted the importance of international education during Maryland International Education Day, alongside Higher Education Secretary Dr. Sanjay Rai, Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, and other university and embassy leaders, which emphasized the significance of recruiting international students and sending American students abroad to foster innovation in STEM research. Higher Education Secretary Dr. Rai furthered these efforts by meeting with leadership from the University of Maryland Baltimore County to discuss international student recruitment, particularly in the College of Engineering & Information Technology, which saw an increase in international master's students. Additionally, Higher Education Secretary Dr. Rai attended a farewell reception for Ambassador Taranjit Singh Sandhu of India, where the newly launched *U.S.-India Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies* (ICET) program was discussed, underscoring Maryland's commitment to expanding global partnerships in critical sectors.

In 2024, Maryland strengthened its cybersecurity leadership through cross-agency collaboration with NATO, especially our State Partner Estonia. The Maryland National Guard (MDNG) showcased its cyber defense expertise during multinational exercises, including *Crossed Swords*, *Locked Shields*, *Defender Europe 24*, and *Spring Storm 24*. These events, conducted with NATO partners, supported NATO's goal of improving interoperability among Allied forces while enhancing Maryland's position as a leader in cyber defense. The Office of the Secretary of State engaged with staff of the Embassy of Estonia to ensure continued focus on cybersecurity and student exchange in their long-standing partnership. Discussions also explored the possibility of future business and government delegations. Additionally, Adjutant General Janeen Birckhead and senior MDNG leaders met with Estonia's Cyber Defense Commander to discuss evolving threats and future collaboration. In October, Lt. Governor Aruna Miller, Adjutant General Birckhead, and Secretary of State Susan C. Lee hosted a U.S. State Department International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) event with NATO participants, showcasing the MDNG's State Partnership Program, the Cyber Defense Program, and its role in international defense cooperation. These efforts highlighted Maryland's cutting-edge capabilities in countering digital threats and reinforced its global leadership in cybersecurity in an increasingly complex digital landscape.

8. Leading on Climate and Environmental Solutions

In 2024, the Subcabinet for International Affairs actively advanced Maryland's environmental priorities through international collaborations with key global stakeholders from Canada, South Africa, Brazil, the Czech Republic, Liberia, the Netherlands, China and Taiwan, focusing on climate action, sustainability, and green technologies.

A key moment was Maryland's participation in COP29 in Azerbaijan in November, where Secretary of the Environment Serena McIlwain showcased Maryland's climate leadership at high-level climate meetings and events hosted by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), U.S. State Department, U.S. Climate Alliance, Under2 Coalition, and America's All In Coalition. At this global platform, Secretary of the Environment McIlwain furthered discussions on subnational climate solutions with representatives from China, building off recent trips to Beijing and Berkely to emphasize Maryland's interest in continuing to work with China to share best practices and advance climate solutions at the subnational level.

During the U.N. Climate Week in New York City, Maryland was well-represented for prominent international dialogues. Secretary of the Environment McIlwain participated in several high-level roundtables with global leaders, including Heads of State and Ministers from the Under2 Coalition and the Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance, and held bilateral meetings with Quebec Minister of the Environment Benoit Charette and Premier Thamsanqa Ntuli from KwaZulu Natal, South Africa. The Office of the Secretary of State facilitated the meeting between Premier Ntuli through Sister State connections, and also participated in panel discussions featuring the Deputy Minister of Environment and Climate Change for the Government of Canada on the topics of Regenerative Agriculture and the essential role of small and minority organizations in this field.



Secretary of Environment Serena McIlwain at the U.S.-China Circular Economy Cooperation Forum during the mission to China led by John Podesta, Senior Advisor on Climate to President Joe Biden

Maryland was actively engaged in U.S.-China climate cooperation, with Secretary of the Environment McIlwain representing the state in high-level climate discussions in both China and California, and climate solutions being a common theme of all meetings held by Subcabinet members with Chinese delegations throughout the year (see the China highlight section above). During her trip to China, Secretary of the Environment McIlwain engaged with representatives from China's National Development and Reform Commission, the Circular Economy Industry Association and biogas and solar companies interested in doing business in Maryland, highlighting Maryland as a hub for green technology investment. Additionally, Maryland's commitment to sustainability was featured at the U.S.-China Climate Summit in California, where Secretary of the Environment McIlwain championed the state's climate leadership.

Maryland fostered climate solutions with a delegation from the Czech Republic led by Deputy Minister Tomáš Tesař of the Ministry of Environment, where Maryland's Institute of Marine Environmental Technology (IMET) demonstrated cutting-edge research on sustainable aquaculture and coastal restoration, and the Office of the Secretary of State and Department of the Environment reinforced Maryland's focus on waste reduction, recycling, and combating greenhouse gas pollution. Additionally, representatives from

the Office of the Secretary of State and Department of Commerce arranged a tour of the Middle Branch Restoration Project in Baltimore.

The Office of the Secretary of State and the Department of the Environment held virtual meetings with counterparts from the State of Rio de Janeiro and the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES) to discuss environmental solutions and the renewal of their 2013 MOU. This MOU focuses on water management, as both Maryland and Rio de Janeiro share similar water bodies—the Chesapeake Bay and the Guanabara Bay, respectively. Since the MOU's signing, UMCES has continued to collaborate with Rio de Janeiro to enhance water management systems. Recently, UMCES Chief of Staff Dave Nemazie traveled to Rio to present at a technical conference hosted by Rio's environmental department.

9. Pursuing Innovations in the Life Sciences

Maryland is an acknowledged leader in the life sciences industry in the United States. Maryland agencies, in particular the Office of the Secretary of State and the Department of Commerce, diligently pursue promotion of the life sciences in all aspects of their work, both locally and globally. In 2024, the Subcabinet for International Affairs strengthened Maryland's leadership in the life sciences through ongoing engagements with foreign countries, the Sister States, and international corporations. Such engagements often involved cross-agency collaboration and participation in large-scale conferences which highlight biotechnology, scientific investment, and pharmaceutical research. The actions described below demonstrate Maryland's commitment to remain a top life sciences leader in the U.S. and internationally.



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich, and OAH Chief Judge Chung Pak with members of the Korean American Professional Association in Life Sciences (KAPAL)

Secretary of State Susan C. Lee showcased the significance of Maryland's life sciences industry with her opening remarks in October at the 2024 Korean American Professional Association of Life Sciences (KAPAL) 8th Annual Conference, which was co-hosted with the Korean Innovation Center (KIC-DC), the Korean-American Scientists and Engineers Association (KSEA-DC), and the Korean Life Scientist Association of Maryland (KLAM). Also, in attendance at this Conference, the Department of Commerce promoted Maryland as an ideal place to invest to an audience of Korean and Korean-American life sciences companies. The Conference featured topics such as the latest Gene Therapy Approaches for

Neurodevelopmental Disorders, the FDA's Investigational New Drug application (IND), and Artificial Intelligence in drug development. The Office of the Secretary of State used the opportunity of this Conference to connect attending innovators, entrepreneurs, and investors with relevant State agencies urging them to locate their business operations in Maryland. One example was the Secretary of State's follow-up introduction of the CEO of a digital healthcare startup company offering a FDA Class II-listed remote therapeutic monitoring (RTM) solution for musculoskeletal conditions to Maryland's Department of Health and the Department of Commerce; this company is interested in expanding access to musculoskeletal care within the public health system.



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, Commissioners of the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives, Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich, and U.S.-Sino Innovation Alliance Delegation Members

Other notable OSOS highlights included Secretary of State Lee's remarks at the 2024 Washington International Forum on Innovation and Cooperation hosted by the U.S.-Sino Innovation Alliance (USIA) in October; Secretary Lee's recorded remarks to the Chinese Biopharmaceutical Association's June Conference in Suzhou, China (the CBA is one of the largest Chinese-American life sciences professional associations in the U.S.); Deputy Secretary of State Michael Lore's meetings with life sciences business executives in Taiwan in August; and Director of International Affairs Nitsch's discussions in June with Nigeria's Minister of Education Chukwudi Nwachukwu Igboeli at the Pan African City Exposition at Bowie State University, at which they discussed partnerships between Maryland universities and Nigerian counterparts in the realm of scientific research, specifically in life sciences and pharmaceuticals.

The Department of Commerce coordinated Maryland's inaugural participation at the China International Import Expo (CIIE) in November, during which seven Maryland companies exhibited, and an 8th company participated. Early results include three company-level MOU's or announced collaborations for further engagement with the China market in various noteworthy FDI activities, including the Anhui-based biogas company that previously met with the Secretary of State and Secretary of Agriculture in Annapolis. Commerce had meetings with government officials in Suzhou, Nanjing, Jinan, Shanghai, and Hefei to increase the exposure of Maryland as a diverse and inclusive business-friendly State. Commerce also met with various Chinese businesses to elevate Maryland's stance as one of the most dynamic industry clusters in Life Sciences and Biotechnology in the United States. In November, Secretary of Commerce Kevin A. Anderson led a delegation of 11 Maryland companies at the 2024 MEDICA Trade Fair and met with over

two dozen potential FDI prospects, including one of the largest defense companies in Germany, Rhein-Metall. The team also hosted a special event with seven European life sciences clusters to promote Maryland on a larger scale. Additionally, Commerce attended the Arab Health Trade Show for medical technology in Dubai with a delegation of nine companies, many of whom were funded by ExportMD and STEP funds. One key result was the confirmation of a \$100,000+ export sale from a company that attended with the delegation.

Maryland further engaged in multidisciplinary dialogue with global partners, including Australia, India, and Japan. These efforts focused on foreign direct investment and partnerships to develop the life sciences. Lt. Governor Aruna Miller hosted a delegation from Victoria, Australia and focused on promoting economic development, specifically in the life sciences, between the two states. In December, Commerce met with a major FDI prospect from India in the life sciences sector and has reported that Maryland is on the shortlist for consideration along with four other states. In addition to developing a series of life science webinars to deliver to overseas life science industry clusters, Commerce participated in a Maryland Webinar for Kyoto Research Park, promoting Maryland to Japanese companies in the Life Sciences sector. Regarding the Maryland-Japan relationship, the Office of the Secretary of State is working to expand the Kanagawa, Japan Sister State relationship to include cooperation in the field of life sciences with a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

10. Promoting Maryland's Equine Industry

In 2024, the Subcabinet for International Affairs worked to expand Maryland's global presence in the equine industry through multiple international engagements, primarily with the countries of Ireland, Mexico, France, and China. The equine industry plays a prominent role in Maryland's culture and history, as well as the agricultural sector, which is the largest sector of Maryland's economy, and contributes to affiliated industries such as tourism and hospitality.



Maryland Leaders and Diplomats at Washington International Horse Show Embassy Night, including: Lieutenant Governor Aruna Miller, Ambassador of Mongolia BATBAYAR Ulziidelger, Ambassador of Malaysia Dato' Seri Mohamed Nazri Abdul Aziz, Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, Adjutant General Janeen L. Birckhead, Secretary of Commerce Kevin A. Anderson, Secretary of Maryland Higher Education Commission Dr. Sanjay Rai, Secretary of General Services Atif T. Chaudhry, Chief Administrative Law Judge Chung K. Park, State Senator Clarence Lam, Commissioners of the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives, and Citizen Diplomats

Key activities included hosting the 2024 Embassy Night (a diplomatic reception) at the Washington International Horse Show (WIHS), which attracted more than 300 VIPs from 26 countries, including

ambassadors, economic ministers, and other high-level diplomats. Embassy Night at the WIHS provided excellent networking opportunities for hundreds of people active in the international affairs and diplomatic spheres and showcased the significance and vibrancy of Maryland's International Affairs portfolio. The event serves as an excellent forum to strengthen international relationships across the Administration, and



Lt. Governor Aruna Miller providing remarks at Washington International Horse Show Embassy Night

to demonstrate Maryland as a premier destination for high-level equestrian competition to global stakeholders. The WIHS, previously held in Washington, D.C. and North Carolina, contributes a \$25 million economic impact in Maryland. Nearly every member of the Subcabinet attended, including Lt. Governor Aruna Miller, Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, Secretary of Agriculture Kevin M. Atticks, Secretary of Commerce Kevin A. Anderson, Higher Education Secretary Dr. Sanjay Rai, Adjutant General Janeen Birkhead and Deputy Secretary of Environment Suzanne Dorsey; other Maryland leaders and Olympian competitors joined the Diplomatic Reception as well. Secretary of State Lee submitted a memo to the Preakness Festival Committee on ways to expand international engagement for the Preakness Festival, including a Diplomatic Reception similar to the one held at the WIHS.



Department of Agriculture Secretary Kevin M. Atticks and the Irish Minister for Agriculture, Food, and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue, during the equine genetics outbound trade mission to Ireland

The Department of Agriculture participated in two equine genetics related trade missions this year. Secretary of Agriculture Atticks led a trade mission to Ireland where he met with the Irish Minister of Agriculture, R.A.C.E. Academy, the Euro Paint Horse Association, the Irish Harness Racing Association, and officials from Cork County (Maryland's Sister State in Ireland) among others. The Department of Agriculture also met with livestock genetics companies and associations in Mexico to determine potential trade missions for Maryland genetics producers in 2025. Additionally, Maryland supported an exchange program between Loch Moy in Maryland and Millstreet International in Ireland, while promoting international interest in Maryland Horse Month (October 2024), which featured high-profile events like the Maryland 5 Star and Washington International Horse Show.

Maryland also explored equine exchange programs with counterparts in France and China. The Office of the Secretary of State (OSOS) along with the Department of Agriculture and the Maryland Horse Industry Board discussed bilateral opportunities in the equine industry with representatives from the Chinese Embassy and our Sister State in China, Anhui Province. In France, Maryland worked to foster equine vocational and student exchanges with Sister State Hauts-de-France (see details in the Hauts-de-France section above). Through these initiatives, Maryland further solidified its leadership in the global equine industry, emphasizing education, collaboration, and innovation across multiple international markets.

2024 Strategic Goal Highlights, by Agency

This section highlights, by Member Agency, the progress made on our strategic priorities and the efforts undertaken to foster global partnerships, advance economic growth, and strengthen Maryland's position on the world stage.

Secretary of State

1. One of the top highlights for Governor Wes Moore and his Administration in 2024 was the official visit by His Majesty King Abdullah II of Jordan in September. This was the first official visit by a foreign head of state to the Maryland State House. The Governor first met privately with the King, and then the Governor and the King had a roundtable meeting with Maryland CEO's and executives to discuss investment and trade opportunities in a wide variety of areas. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, along with Secretary of Commerce Kevin A. Anderson, participated in the discussions with King Abdullah, Governor Wes Moore, and the State's business leaders. The Office of the Secretary of State assisted the Governor's Office in supporting the roundtable meeting.
2. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and her Office co-hosted the 2024 Embassy Night (a diplomatic reception) at the Washington International Horse Show (WIHS), together with the Prince George's County Government, in October. Attended by 300 participants, the WIHS Diplomatic Reception included Subcabinet for International Affairs members: Lt. Governor Aruna Miller, Secretary of Agriculture Kevin M. Atticks, Secretary of Commerce Kevin A. Anderson, Higher Education Secretary Dr. Sanjay Rai, and Adjutant General Janeen L. Birkhead, as well as the Ambassadors to the U.S. from Malaysia and Mongolia, economic ministers and high-level diplomats from 26 countries, and several Olympics equestrian competitors. The OSOS is using "horse diplomacy" to promote economic and cultural relations with like-minded countries and Sister States.



Governor Wes Moore and Secretary of State Susan C. Lee meet with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau

3. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee represented the State of Maryland and Governor Wes Moore at a reception in July with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau at the Embassy of Canada, also attended by Canada's Ambassador to the U.S. Kirsten Hillman. Secretary Lee discussed with Prime Minister

Trudeau strengthening economic and cultural ties between Maryland and Canada with a focus on the life sciences, cybersecurity, and new technologies.

4. The Office of the Secretary of State continued to maintain active relationships with many of Maryland's 21 Sister States, notable among them in 2024 Hauts-de-France (France), Kanagawa (Japan), Anhui (China), Gyeongnam and Jeollanamdo (South Korea), and Rio de Janeiro State (Brazil). The relationships with Hauts-de-France and Anhui stood out in particular in 2024 because of these Sister States' regular and frequent communications with the OSOS. Consistent with the Moore-Miller Administration's strategic goals, these Sister States relationships foster global partnerships on topics of mutual interest, advance economic growth, and enhance Maryland's position on the world stage.



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, Higher Education Secretary Dr. Sanjay Rai, and Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Chair Marco V. Avila, and staff with diplomats and community leaders at the Argentina vs. Guatemala COPA Tournament

5. The Office of the Secretary of State hosted diplomats from Argentina and Colombia at two exhibition soccer matches in June at the NFL stadium in Prince George's County. These well-attended games (50,000) pitted Argentina against Guatemala and the United States against Colombia and grew out of diplomatic discussions a year earlier between the OSOS, Argentina's Ambassador to the U.S., and the Maryland Sports Commission. Exemplifying the OSOS's "sports diplomacy," Maryland's representatives included Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, Lt. Governor Aruna Miller, Higher Education Secretary Dr. Sanjay Rai, Service and Civic Innovation Secretary Paul Monteiro, Deputy Secretary of State Michael Lore, and SOS Senior Advisor Joseph Gebhardt. During the two soccer games, the Maryland representatives discussed economic, educational, and cultural topics with the attending Latin American diplomats and Maryland's Hispanic Chamber of Commerce leaders.



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, Secretary of the Environment Serena McIlwain, Secretary of Agriculture Kevin M. Atticks, and Commerce representatives meet with a delegation from the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT)

6. In 2024, the Office of the Secretary of State continued Maryland's robust relationship with China, hosting a number of meetings with Chinese diplomats and business leaders. Three of these meetings stood out in particular. In June, Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, Secretary of Agriculture Kevin M. Atticks, Secretary of Commerce Kevin A. Anderson, Higher Education Secretary Dr. Sanjay Rai, and other Maryland officials hosted a meeting in Bethesda where important connections were made with 32 Chinese CEO's who were in the United States studying at a prominent business university. In July, Secretary of State Lee, Secretary of Agriculture Atticks, Secretary of the Environment Serena McIlwain, and a Department of Commerce representative hosted a meeting at the State House with a large delegation from the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT). Discussion focused on ways to improve bilateral trade, particularly in environmental technologies, agriculture, and educational exchanges. In November, Secretary Lee and her team hosted an official meeting with a five-member delegation from Sister State Anhui Province led by two high-ranking provincial officials. Discussion focused on foreign direct investment, educational exchange, and Anhui's request that Secretary Lee visit the Province and China next year and renew the 45-year long Sister State Cooperation Agreement. A culmination of Maryland's many ongoing diplomatic and economic engagements with China and Anhui Province was the Chinese Embassy Minister's invitation in December for Secretary Lee to visit China in 2025.

Lieutenant Governor

1. On March 26, 2024, the world watched as the historic Francis Scott Key Bridge was struck by a malfunctioning ship, causing the collapse of the 1.6-mile-long bridge into the Patapsco River. The collapse was devastating, resulting in the loss of six transportation workers' lives. Additionally, due to the collapse, transportation and logistics operations at the Port of Baltimore were halted. The Port of Baltimore's global economic impact is estimated at more than \$70 billion annually.

In response, Lt. Governor Aruna Miller was appointed by Governor Wes Moore as the Chair of the Francis Scott Key Bridge Intergovernmental Economic Response Team. Following her appointment, Lt. Governor Miller spearheaded recovery efforts through collaboration with local, state, and federal leaders to ensure the effective distribution of aid and resources to businesses and port workers affected by the collapse. The Office of the Secretary of State (OSOS) also provided

support by managing and responding to incoming letters from foreign dignitaries on behalf of Governor Moore.

2. As chair of the Aerospace States Association, Lt. Governor Aruna Miller convened aerospace industry leaders in February to explore how Maryland can effectively collaborate with federal and private entities to support workforce development in the sector. Maryland is home to 9,600 aerospace and defense businesses, generating \$37.8 billion in annual economic activity and securing \$11.5 billion in federal contracts. Lt. Governor Miller is committed to fostering an inclusive and diverse workforce, with a particular focus on empowering women and people of color within the industry. Additionally, Lt. Governor Miller is working to make the aerospace workforce more accessible to international residents.
3. In October 2023, Lt. Governor Aruna Miller visited the National Quantum Laboratory at the University of Maryland (QLab). QLab, a quantum user facility, is a partnership between the University of Maryland and IonQ designed to accelerate practical quantum computing and deliver meaningful real-world quantum applications. The QLab Collaboration Space enables users from across the nation and around the world to work closely with one another and QLab personnel to develop and co-design quantum technologies on one of the world's most powerful quantum computers. Because of this partnership, the University of Maryland, located in Prince George's County, has been recognized as an epicenter for quantum computing. Lt. Governor Miller's visit highlighted the Moore-Miller Administration's commitment to investing in 21st-century technology to expand the workforce and grow Maryland's economy.
4. Lt. Governor Aruna Miller serves on the Maryland Economic Council (MEC). The MEC's mission is to convene experienced leaders to analyze and recommend economic policies that foster job growth, build the state's workforce, and create a regulatory environment that enables local, national, and international businesses to grow and thrive.
5. Lt. Governor Aruna Miller worked with the Maryland Federal Delegation and Prince George's County's leaders to assist with bringing the FBI Headquarters to Greenbelt, MD. The relocation of the FBI Headquarters will add 7,000 jobs to Maryland's economy and generate an annual revenue of over \$4 billion dollars. The FBI's International Operations division operates with specialized agents in more than 180 countries.
6. In January 2024, the Moore-Miller Administration announced new policies to streamline Artificial Intelligence. The Administration is focused on providing appropriate and necessary guardrails on the use of AI within state agencies to protect both state and national security.
7. The Moore-Miller Administration is focused on combating climate change. To achieve this, the Administration announced a comprehensive plan in 2023 to reduce the state's pollution by 60% by 2031 and transition Maryland to 100% clean energy by 2035.

As part of the initiative to reform state government, Lt. Governor Aruna Miller visited the Maryland Department of the Environment in early February. During the visit, Lt. Governor Miller met with

state employees to identify gaps in current environmental policies and to discuss how the Lt. Governor's office can support the Department of the Environment in achieving a 60% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2031 and reaching net-zero emissions by 2045. Additionally, she met with climate change industry leaders to establish a public-private partnership for combating climate change.

8. Lt. Governor Aruna Miller hosted a group of high school exchange students who had been in the U.S. for the past year. During the visit, she addressed the challenges currently affecting international students and proposed solutions to encourage greater civic engagement among them.
9. Lt. Governor Aruna Miller met with international women entrepreneurs participating in the U.S. State Department's International Visitors Leadership Program (IVLP). The primary goal of IVLP is to connect international entrepreneurs with state leaders to foster long-term relationships that align with U.S. foreign policy goals.
10. Lt. Governor Aruna Miller met with the Anhui Province Delegation in December 2023 to highlight the state's commitment to higher education in Maryland and its support for international students.
11. Lt. Governor Aruna Miller served as a liaison between the Embassy of Türkiye and the Department of Commerce to facilitate connections through Maryland's Global Gateway Program.

Department of Agriculture



Secretary of Agriculture Kevin M. Atticks participates in a USDA Foreign Agriculture Service trade mission to India

1. In April, Secretary of Agriculture Kevin M. Atticks of Department of Agriculture (MDA) participated in a trade mission to India with the United States Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service. The week-long trip presented new opportunities for Maryland and other states

to connect with Indian agricultural industries and develop market opportunities for businesses in Maryland and the United States.

2. From May to June, Secretary of Agriculture Kevin M. Atticks led an equine genetics trade mission to Ireland focusing on quarter horses. During his trip, he met with the Irish Minister of Agriculture, R.A.C.E. Academy, Euro Paint Horse Association, Irish Harness Racing Association, Cork County Council, among others.
3. In September, MDA met with representatives from the Japanese Embassy, Takashi Sadakane, Counselor of Food, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and Kiyohisa Wakuda, First Secretary for Agriculture & Food Economic Section. Andrew Tsui, President of the Ike Jime Foundation, attended the meeting. The Japanese Embassy wanted to know more about Maryland seafood, specifically wild-caught Chesapeake blue catfish, snakehead/Chesapeake Channa, Maryland blue crab, and oysters.
4. In August, MDA International Marketing led a Southern United States Trade Association (SUSTA) trade mission to China and Hong Kong. Three food companies participated in the mission to Beijing, Guangzhou, and Hong Kong. In each city, companies met with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s Agricultural Trade Office for a market briefing, participated in retail tours for a competitor and market analysis, and met one-on-one with pre-qualified buyers and importers. Sales are anticipated for all participating companies. While the market in China is currently challenging, it is still essential to U.S. agricultural companies, and the market share lost during COVID needs to be regained.



Department of Agriculture Deputy Secretary Steve Connelly met with a delegation from Indonesia at the World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wisconsin

5. In October, Deputy Secretary Steve Connelly participated in an inbound trade mission from Indonesia at the World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wisconsin. This mission was hosted by the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture. The Indonesian delegation included officials from Indonesia's government, academia,

public and private sectors. The group learned about agriculture in Wisconsin, focusing on dairy farms and processing. Multiple Maryland dairy breeders were at the World Dairy Expo. Indonesia plans to increase the amount of fluid milk for children and purchase shelf-stable milk in the short term. In the long term, they will improve their dairy industry with equipment and genetics.



Department of Agriculture Secretary Kevin M. Atticks with Ambassador MaryKay Loss Carlson during the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture outbound trade mission to the Philippines

6. In November, MDA Secretary of Agriculture Kevin M. Atticks participated in the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) outbound trade mission to the Philippines. This mission was part of the USDA's Emerging Markets Program, designed to promote exports of U.S. agricultural products to countries that have or are developing market-oriented economies and have the potential to be viable commercial markets.

Identified potential opportunities include poultry, dairy, processed vegetables, frozen and prepared seafood, beef, and grains.

Department of Commerce

1. The Maryland Department of Commerce led delegations to five international trade shows in 2024: Arab Health, Singapore Air Show, InfoSecurity Europe, China International Import Expo, and MEDICA. Through these trade shows, Commerce supported over 40 small businesses to exhibit and promote international sales overseas. Commerce was also able to promote the Maryland brand and highlight the state's prominence in key strategic sectors including life sciences, aerospace and defense, cybersecurity, and manufacturing. These trade shows were funded in part by the SBA's STEP grant, allowing Commerce to heavily reduce the cost of participation to Maryland companies.



The Maryland Commerce Team and county partners at the Maryland booth, SelectUSA, June 2024

2. The Maryland Department of Commerce coordinated the state's participation in the annual SelectUSA Summit. SelectUSA's 10th Investment Summit marked the largest Investment Summit in SelectUSA history, with over 5,000+ plus attendees, 96 international markets, and for the first time, all 56 U.S. states and territories represented. SelectUSA attracted 1000+ economic development organization representatives and 2500+ international delegates. The Summit featured Maryland's largest ever booth, which was also one of the largest on the show floor, matched only by Ohio. Counties were invited to co-exhibit for the first time with Frederick, Charles, and Howard Counties, as well as GBC representatives of the Baltimore region welcomed into our booth. In addition, Montgomery and Prince George's Counties exhibited on their own next to the Maryland booth, and delegates were sent from Anne Arundel, St. Mary's, and Harford Counties. The Department of Commerce team held over 122 meetings across 3 days, as well as attended seven side events with foreign delegations from key markets: PGEDC's reception featuring the Mexico delegation, Canada, Japan, UK, Germany, Netherlands, and China. In addition, Maryland's Spin-Off Event is an annual two-day tour for potential foreign investors to familiarize themselves with the state while in town for the SelectUSA Summit. The Department of Commerce coordinated an Innovation-themed spin-off with all 60+ participants joining one agenda on the first day, and then splitting into 3 industry-focused groups on day two for a total of 4 different day-long agendas that included visits in 7 counties. The Department of Commerce also hosted two of our foreign offices during this time period: our China office and our Korea office. Each representative met with approximately 15 Maryland companies to present opportunities within their respective markets for expansion overseas.



Maryland Commerce hosts the cyber-tech spinoff group on a site visit to the Kenneth S. Ulman Innovation Hub in Howard County during SelectUSA, June 2024

3. The Maryland Department of Commerce developed the Maryland Innovation Lab together with the World Trade Center Institute and the UK's foremost corporate innovation specialist, L Marks. The Innovation Lab pairs leading global startups with corporate partners to solve critical challenges and unlock future opportunities through open innovation. The Maryland Innovation Lab is a public-private initiative dedicated to driving corporate innovation, global trade and next-gen solutions in strategic industries. Central to the Lab is a 10-week solution validation sprint, a collaboration between startups and corporations guided by L Marks. This program allows Maryland companies to take advantage of world-class innovation at a fraction of the cost. This program was also the first-in-the nation public-private state-level innovation lab, bringing attention to Maryland as an Innovation State. The Maryland Innovation Lab's first initiative focused on addressing key challenges within the state's food sector and included pioneering corporate partners, Pompeian Olive Oil, SIMPLi, and Sodexo. Five innovation challenge themes were chosen by the corporations, ranging from sustainability and workforce to retail and product optimization. 600 global startups were scouted, with 92 startups from more than 60 countries applying for a spot in the Lab. Following a competitive startup Pitch Day event in April 2024, six startups were matched with the corporate partners to explore collaborations and validate solutions over 10 weeks. In September 2024, Maryland celebrated the successful completion of Maryland Innovation Lab's first-ever cohort with a Demo Day.
4. The Maryland Department of Commerce supported the Governor's historic meeting with Jordanian King Abdullah II by identifying 20 high-level private sector participants for a business roundtable and securing their participation in the event, together with the Secretary of Commerce, Kevin Anderson.
5. The Maryland Department of Commerce actively supported several international MOUs and partnerships in 2024 as part of the state's subnational strategy. Highlights included the Quebec breakfast at Advamed in Oct 2024 where the partners brought together the business delegations of both partners for a formal event highlighting opportunities in each location, as well as a new MOU signing held at BIO in June 2024. This MOU was between Maryland (Tech Council) and Quebec business associations

and was a direct outcome of 4 years of collaboration at the government level, leading to further collaboration among private sector partners. In addition, negotiations for renewal of the Midlands, UK and Ontario MOUs got underway in 2024 with signings expected in 2025.

6. The Maryland Department of Commerce applied for, and was awarded, \$550,000 in federal funding from the SBA to support export initiatives. Commerce supports over 100 small businesses this past year with this funding through both trade show support and the ExportMD grant program. The state's participation in the STEP program has allowed the department to quadruple the number of companies it has funded annually over the past decade.
7. The Maryland Department of Commerce significantly expanded participation in the Global Gateway Program, an incentive program designed to promote Maryland as a place to invest especially among smaller, innovative companies. This program is a first-in-the nation program design that offers foreign companies considering a permanent presence in the U.S. six months of free membership in any one of 15 different incubators and accelerators across the State. This program has attracted a diverse level of participation from all continents, as well as participation from all regions of the state. The program has so far had 148 companies apply to our program in the first two years, with 43 companies awarded to date from 24 countries, and 6 continents. The majority of this activity occurred in 2024. Each of the participating companies travels to Maryland to pursue their investment project, and their travel costs are not covered by the incentive program. This spending is estimated at \$28,964 per company (\$1,245,452 in business tourism related spending alone for 43 participants). The program has also resulted in 30 direct jobs (with only 15 companies having fully completed their program), as well as 14 indirect jobs related to the participants' business tourism expenses, for a total of 44 jobs.

Department of the Environment

1. In May, Secretary of the Environment Serena McIlwain of the Maryland Department of the Environment participated in a U.S. - China high-level conference on subnational climate action. The event was hosted by the California - China Climate Institute at the University of Berkeley, where Secretary of the Environment McIlwain championed Maryland's climate leadership on a multi-national panel and expressed our interest in developing international partnerships to grow Maryland's green economy. In September, Secretary of the Environment McIlwain participated, on behalf of the Moore-Miller Administration, in a high-level U.S.- China delegation trip, led by John Podesta, to advance climate negotiations between the two countries. On this trip, the Secretary met with officials from the National Development and Reform Commission and Circular Economy Industry Association about areas of potential climate cooperation. She also advanced conversations with two biogas and solar companies interested in doing business in Maryland.
2. In September, Secretary of the Environment Serena McIlwain participated in multiple high-level national and international exchanges during Climate Week in New York City. Specifically, the Secretary joined three roundtables on subnational climate action involving Heads of State and representing Ministers from across the international Under2 Coalition and the Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance. Secretary of the Environment McIlwain also had one-on-one meetings with the Quebec Minister of the Environment Benoit Charette and Premier Thamsanqa Ntuli from KwaZulu Natal, South Africa. In both meetings, Secretary of the Environment McIlwain extended greetings on behalf of the Moore-Miller Administration

and shared our intention to continue collaborating around climate change through MOUs or other international exchanges.

3. Secretary of the Environment Serena McIlwain represented the Administration at the COP29 international climate meetings in November. During this trip, the Secretary was able to talk about Maryland's climate leadership through multiple panels and events hosted by the UNFCCC, U.S. State Department, U.S. Climate Alliance, Under2 Coalition, and America's All In Coalition. She was also able to further conversations with China, building off recent trips to Beijing and Berkely to emphasize state interest in continuing to work with China to share best practices and advance climate solutions at the subnational level.

Maryland Higher Education Commission

1. Higher Education Secretary Dr. Sanjay Rai attended the farewell reception for the Ambassador of the Republic of India, Taranjit Singh Sandhu. The U.S.-India relationship includes defense, education, and the recently launched U.S.-India Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (ICET). The program is intended to elevate and expand strategic technology partnerships and cooperation between the governments, businesses, and academic institutions of the two countries.
2. The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) partnered with Towson University, the Office of the Secretary of State (OSOS), and the Maryland International Education Consortium (MIEC) to host Maryland International Education Day. During the event, Higher Education Secretary Dr. Sanjay Rai discussed the importance of recruiting international students and sending American students to expand STEM research innovations. Governor Wes Moore officially recognized the day with a Governor's Proclamation, and representatives from Maryland universities and embassies attended the event to learn more about collaborative student exchange programs.
3. Higher Education Secretary Dr. Sanjay Rai and Secretary of Transportation Paul J. Wiedefeld met to discuss how the higher education segment could provide meaningful input into the Key Bridge redevelopment discussion. The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) agreed to take the lead to convene four institutions (University of Maryland - College Park, Johns Hopkins University, Morgan State University, and University of Maryland Baltimore County) to discuss engaging with respect to academic curriculum lessons and bridge construction modernization planning for the institutions to learn "best practices" and offer students real-life applications. Higher Education Secretary Dr. Rai sent a memo to Secretary of Transportation Wiedefeld discussing the capabilities of Maryland higher education institutions that can contribute to the bridge redesign and build.
4. Higher Education Secretary Dr. Sanjay Rai met with University of Maryland Baltimore County President Valerie Shears Ashby and her Cabinet to discuss international student recruitment and UMBC's influx of international master's students in the College of Engineering & Information Technology (COEIT). Higher Education Secretary Dr. Rai remarked on the important work in computing programs and the need to continue attracting more international students not only at the graduate level, but also undergraduates.
5. Derrick Coley, the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC)'s Executive Director of External Relations, and the Office of the Secretary of State (OSOS) staff met with representatives from the

Education Office of the Chinese Embassy to discuss how the Young Envoys Scholarship (YES) program (created for international student-to-student and teacher-to-teacher exchanges) could be a good opportunity for Maryland students.

6. Higher Education Secretary Dr. Sanjay Rai joined Secretary of State Susan C. Lee to welcome students visiting UMBC from the Kanagawa Association of Private Junior and Senior High Schools in Japan. He discussed how the educational system operates in the U.S., the role that the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) plays in providing access to higher education in Maryland, and having the student return to Maryland to attend college. After the visit, MHEC provided the Office of the Secretary of State (OSOS) with a link to a listing of Maryland colleges and universities to share with the students.
7. Derrick Coley (Director of External Relations) and Kristin Clarkson (Director of Communications) joined the Office of the Secretary of State (OSOS) staff to meet with representatives from Hauts-de-France. Additionally, they provided requested information concerning the search for partnerships and international study/exchange and research opportunities in academic programs in fields such as engineering, agriculture, and geology.

Department of Transportation



MPA meets with a delegation from the Balkans and provides a tour of the Port of Baltimore

1. Maryland Port Administration (MPA) hosted a delegation from the Balkans (Kosovo, Serbia and North Macedonia) in February. The delegation included representatives from government, academia, and non-profit leaders in business and economics. Representatives were also participating in a week-long Open World Program sponsored by the Congressional Office for International Leadership in Washington, D.C.

2. In February, the Maryland Aviation Administration (MAA) attended Routes Americas, the premier conference for air service development in the Western Hemisphere. MAA met with eleven international airlines about potential new service to BWI Marshall Airport, as well as six airlines that currently offer international service.
3. MAA secured a new international air service from BWI Marshall Airport to Bermuda with the startup airline BermudAir. Flights launched in March, operating three times per week.
4. MPA attended the TPM24 Conference in Los Angeles, CA in March. TPM is the largest conference for the trans-Pacific and global container shipping and logistics community and serves to bring together U.S. ports and ocean carriers.
5. In May, the MAA attended Airport Council International-North America's JumpStart event, the premier conference for domestic air service development. Despite the domestic nature of the event, MAA met with six international airlines about potential new service to BWI Marshall Airport, as well as seven airlines that currently offer international service.
6. The MAA saw the return of seasonal flights from BWI Marshall Airport to Frankfurt from Condor and hosted a press event in May to present Condor's new aircraft and their swank interiors.
7. As part of its Air Service Incentive Program promoting new flights, the MAA ran marketing campaigns to support international flights for BermudAir to Bermuda, Condor to Frankfurt, and Copa Airlines to Panama.
8. In October, the MAA attended World Routes, the premier global conference for air service development. MAA met formally with thirteen international airlines about potential service to BWI Marshall Airport, as well as with Southwest Airlines to discuss their plans to begin connecting passengers with international airlines, starting with Icelandair in 2025.



Deputy Secretary of State Michael Lore and representatives of the MPA meet with the Chairman Vo Tan Duc of the Dong Nai Province in Vietnam, and his delegation, October 2024

9. In October, the MPA hosted Chairman Vo Tan Duc of the Dong Nai Province in Vietnam to discuss infrastructure and operations goals at seaports. In October, the MPA hosted a delegation from the Incheon Metropolitan Council (South Korea) to discuss port operations and best management practices.



Johnathon Daniels, Executive Director of the MPA, provided remarks at the Pan African City Expo, June 2024

10. The MPA Executive Director, Jonathan Daniels, spoke at the Pan African City Expo in June on the Port of Baltimore and trade.
11. The MPA hosted members from the Council on Foreign Relations Stephen Kellen Term Member Program in July.
12. The MPA worked closely with Ports America Chesapeake this fall for funding opportunities to construct a grain transfer facility at Seagirt Marine Terminal.
13. The MPA was awarded a \$147 million Environmental Protection Agency CleanPorts Act to fund 213 pieces of zero emissions equipment, as well as climate air quality planning funding.
14. The MAA researched the two winning bids as Aer Lingus announced new air service to Dublin as a result of a tender process. Nashville and their local partners offered \$6.5M, while Indianapolis raised the bar for Air Service Incentive Programs nationwide with a package worth at least \$19M.
15. The MAA worked with the Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) to establish an Air Service Advisory Committee composed of GBC members, with the intent to increase support from local corporations to help attract international airlines. The first meeting was held on 8 November 2024 with representatives from nearly twenty large Maryland corporations.

Maryland Military Department

Maryland National Guard: Advancing Global Partnerships in 2024

In 2024, the Maryland National Guard (MDNG) proudly celebrated 50 combined years of partnership with Estonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), underscoring the depth and longevity of these alliances. The MDNG marked 30 years with Estonia and 20 years with BiH, commemorating this milestone at a special ceremony held in November at the Maryland governor's residence. This event, attended by senior leaders, diplomats, and international partners, showcased Maryland's dedication to global cooperation, emphasizing the Guard's ongoing commitment to advancing security, mutual understanding, and stability across borders.



Joint Terminal Attack Controllers from the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Maryland National Guard train together during Deliberate Response '24, April 2024, Warren Grove, NJ. Deliberate Response '24 was a combined and joint close air support integration exercise created to enhance individual and collective readiness and to support allied interoperability. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Maj. Benjamin Hughes)

Celebrating 50 Years of Partnership

The MDNG's activities in 2024 reflected its commitment to excellence and international collaboration. From participating in complex exercises to advancing cyber defense strategies and strengthening cultural ties, the MDNG demonstrated its value as a globally engaged organization. The 50-year anniversary of partnerships with Estonia and BiH reaffirmed Maryland's legacy of international cooperation, bridging continents and cultures to build a safer, more stable world.

Expanding Global Engagements

Throughout the year, the MDNG actively participated in 79 State Partnership Program (SPP) events, a testament to its enduring commitment to fostering defense capabilities and mutual trust. This included 44

events with Estonia, 33 with BiH, and 14 domestic engagements. Each event was tailored to address specific needs, ranging from tactical training and cyber defense to leadership development and cultural exchanges. These engagements strengthened operational readiness, deepened relationships, and reinforced the MDNG's role as a steadfast partner in international security.

Key Exercises

The MDNG played pivotal roles in several major multinational exercises, including Defender Europe 24 and Spring Storm 24. In Defender Europe 24, MDNG Soldiers and Airmen contributed cyber defense expertise and Joint Fires Observer (JFO) capabilities, directly supporting NATO's objective of improving interoperability across Allied forces. During Spring Storm 24, 42 Soldiers from MDNG worked closely with Estonian counterparts within the Estonian Division Fires. These live-fire exercises were instrumental in enhancing tactical precision, fostering multinational cooperation, and validating joint operational concepts under challenging scenarios. Highlighting Maryland's Capabilities: The IVLP Event.

MDNG Inputs to the Sub-Cabinet for International Affairs Annual Report

In October, the MDNG hosted a dynamic International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) event, showcasing Maryland's capabilities and its contributions to international defense cooperation. The event featured hands-on experience with the A-10 aircraft, a critical component of the Maryland Air National Guard's aviation assets. Participants engaged directly with pilots, learning about the unique close air support capabilities the A-10 provides, and gained insight into Maryland's advanced aviation technology and operational readiness.

The event also included comprehensive overviews of the MDNG's Cyber Defense Program and the State Partnership Program (SPP). The Cyber Defense session demonstrated Maryland's cutting-edge capabilities in countering digital threats, highlighting its leadership in national and international cyber security. The SPP overview emphasized Maryland's enduring partnerships with Bosnia and Herzegovina and Estonia, underscoring collaboration in military training, security, and international cooperation. The IVLP event reaffirmed Maryland's commitment to building international security partnerships and addressing global defense challenges through innovation and collaboration.

Cyber Defense Excellence

The MDNG's contributions to cybersecurity were particularly noteworthy in 2024. Airmen from the 175th Wing Cyber participated in two internationally renowned exercise – Crossed Swords and Locked Shields. These exercises, conducted alongside NATO and Estonian partners, provided unique opportunities to refine defensive strategies against emerging cyber threats. The MDNG demonstrated its leadership in enhancing resilience, protecting critical infrastructure, and building effective joint cyber defense frameworks.

In December, Adjutant General Janeen Birckhead and senior MDNG leaders met with Estonia's Cyber Defense Commander to discuss evolving threats, share best practices, and explore future collaboration opportunities. This engagement emphasized the importance of maintaining a proactive stance in the cyber domain and reinforced the strong partnership between Maryland and Estonia.

Cultural Diplomacy and Leadership Development

The MDNG's 229th Band continued to serve as an ambassador of Maryland's culture and goodwill. The band's performance at the U.S. Ambassador's residence in Tallinn during the Fourth of July celebration

was a highlight of the year, showcasing the unique role of music in bridging cultural divides. Additionally, performances for the Estonian Defense League further strengthened Maryland's bond with Estonia, emphasizing the value of cultural exchanges in fostering international relationships.

MDNG Inputs to the Sub-Cabinet for International Affairs Annual Report

Collaboration with BiH included hosting Joint Terminal Attack Controllers (JTACs) from the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina (AFBiH) at the Warren Grove Range, NJ. This training focused on advancing tactical coordination and joint interoperability, highlighting Maryland's commitment to enhancing BiH's military capabilities. A notable leadership development initiative involved 15 Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) from MDNG's 175th Infantry Battalion working closely with Estonia's Northeastern Defense League. Together, they designed and executed a squad live-fire range, emphasizing leadership, tactical innovation, and readiness. This effort not only bolstered the capabilities of Estonian NCOs but also reinforced the importance of professional development within Maryland's SPP framework.

African Lion



U.S. Army Sgt. Nestor Muma, right, points out the target for Spc. Jude Effah, both infantrymen with 1st Battalion, 175th Infantry Regiment, Maryland National Guard, during squad attack lanes in Ben Ghilouf, Tunisia on May 2024. Africa Lion 2024 marks the 20th anniversary of U.S. Africa Command's premiere joint exercise led by U.S. Army Southern European Task Force, Africa (SETAF-AF), running from April to May across Ghana, Morocco, Senegal, and Tunisia, with over 8,100 participants from 27 nations and NATO contingents. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. William D. Kennedy III)

In 2024, approximately 230 Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 175th Infantry Regiment of the Maryland Army National Guard participated in **African Lion 2024**, marking the largest deployment of the unit in over a decade. Spanning training locations across Morocco, Tunisia, Ghana, and Senegal, the exercise provided a unique opportunity for Maryland Guardsmen to enhance interoperability with partner nations.

In Tunisia, 140 Soldiers collaborated with Tunisian forces to conduct expeditionary deployment operations, weapons training, squad live-fire exercises, and vehicle-based crew gunnery training, leveraging their own military vehicles to replicate real-world deployment scenarios. Distinguished visitors, including MG Janeen Birckhead and international leaders, observed the training and praised the partnership and professionalism demonstrated during the event.

Subsequent phases in Ghana and Senegal showcased multinational expeditionary combat operations. Soldiers from Bravo Company trained alongside the Ghanaian military, sharing live-fire techniques and adapting to extreme environmental conditions. In Senegal, Maryland Guardsmen integrated seamlessly with the Senegalese Armed Forces and U.S. Army 2nd Security Force Assistance Brigade, overcoming cultural and linguistic differences to strengthen bonds and share best practices.

As part of U.S. Africa Command's largest annual training event, African Lion 2024 underscored Maryland's commitment to international collaboration. The 1-175th's involvement not only bolstered partnerships but also highlighted their readiness and adaptability, earning accolades from military and diplomatic leaders alike.

Looking Ahead to 2025

Maryland is recognized as a leader in U.S. subnational engagement. It is one of the most active U.S. States in developing and maintaining subnational engagements with other countries and their states, provinces, regions, and cities. As global issues such as climate change, cybersecurity, and economic growth are being recognized as interconnected with local actions, subnational entities such as cities, states, and regions are playing a larger role in addressing these challenges. Strong subnational relationships are essential in this regard. In the coming years, it is expected that Maryland's participation in global affairs on critical issues will increase at the subnational level, with enhanced relationships with other subnational government entities, international organizations, and the private sector.

For the Governor's Subcabinet for International Affairs, this means an even greater focus on expanding global partnerships, promoting Maryland's leadership on key issues, and enhancing the State's international visibility and global competitiveness. The Subcabinet will continue to take the lead to ensure that Maryland maintains a prominent and influential role in subnational international solutions.

Agency Goals for 2025

Secretary of State

1. Strengthen Maryland's relationships with our Sister States (21 currently). Actions will include completing the evaluation of our existing Sister State relationships, reassessing the elements and criteria for a successful Sister State relationship, and working with Governor Wes Moore to renew Sister State Cooperation Agreements and Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's), which define relationships that deliver mutual benefits to Maryland and the Sister State. These will likely include the renewal of MOUs with KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa, Rio de Janeiro State in Brazil, and Hauts-de-France in France, and a new MOU to expand the Kanagawa, Japan Sister State relationship to include cooperation in the field of life sciences. The Office of the Secretary of State (OSOS) will continue to maintain the excellent relationships and mutually beneficial activities which are ongoing between Maryland and many Sister States.
2. Maintain active diplomatic relations with the Embassies in Washington, D.C., as well as the countries and regions which seek relationships of mutual benefit with Maryland. The Office of the Secretary of State (OSOS) will continue to refer meaningful initiatives presented in these diplomatic settings to the Department of Commerce and other Subcabinet members for further exploration.
3. Continue leveraging Sister State, diplomatic, and other stakeholder relationships to attract investment and foster exchanges in the strategic fields of cybersecurity, quantum computing, life sciences, aerospace/defense, climate and environmental solutions, higher education, and artificial intelligence (AI). The Office of the Secretary of State will closely collaborate with the Subcabinet agencies on these efforts.

4. Plan diplomatic and trade missions to Japan, South Korea, China, and Brazil in 2025 in concert with the Governor's Office.
5. Continue leveraging Sister State, diplomatic, and other stakeholder relationships to promote Maryland's agriculture and equine industry so as to expand its economic and cultural impacts. Main efforts will include co-hosting the 2025 Embassy Night (a diplomatic reception) at the Washington International Horse Show, co-hosting events associated with the 2025 Preakness Festival, and furthering equine industry MOUs with certain Sister States, particularly Ireland, France, and China.

Lieutenant Governor

1. In 2025, Lt. Governor Aruna Miller will continue to collaborate closely with the Office of the Secretary of State and other International Affairs Subcabinet agencies to advance the Moore-Miller Administration's vision. Key priorities include promoting subnational diplomacy, combating climate change, and fostering STEM initiatives within the international community. Additionally, Lt. Governor Aruna Miller and these agencies will work collaboratively to support economic growth and development through partnerships with international businesses.
2. The Moore-Miller Administration has also secured 100% federal funding to rebuild the Francis Scott Key Bridge. The collapse of this critical infrastructure was a devastating event, claiming the lives of six transportation workers and halting logistics operations at the Port of Baltimore. With an estimated annual global economic impact of over \$70 billion, the Port of Baltimore remains a vital local, national, and international economic hub.

Rebuilding the Francis Scott Key Bridge marks a significant step toward revitalizing Maryland's economy while honoring the six lives tragically lost in the collapse. The Moore-Miller Administration expresses gratitude to President Biden for authorizing emergency funds during salvage operations and to the 118th Congress for fully funding the bridge's reconstruction.

Department of Agriculture

1. Increase the number of participating companies in the Southern U.S. Trade Association (SUSTA) and the U.S. Livestock Genetics Export, Inc. (USLGE). These key trade organizations offer federal funding, export assistance, cost-subsidized trade missions, and trade shows for qualified Maryland agricultural companies.
2. Projects planned for 2025 will focus on markets in Southeast Asia and the Middle East as part of U.S. Department of Agriculture initiatives to secure a larger presence for American agricultural products in these regions.
3. Begin to develop overseas markets for the invasive Chesapeake blue catfish. Federal grant funding has been secured for a two-year project to generate sales for blue catfish in Singapore.

Maryland Department of Commerce

1. Attract foreign businesses to expand or relocate into Maryland.

- Increase awareness of Maryland as a place for foreign companies to expand in the U.S., especially in our strategic industries.
 - Work with the Commerce Marketing team to develop & implement an overseas marketing strategy to target specific sub-sectors in specific markets per OIIT's FDI strategy.
 - Work with the industry teams to identify FDI target sub-sectors that are more inclusive (such as logistics), have clusters in rural areas, and more accurately match new data on Maryland's sectors.
 - Develop, strengthen, and maintain 10+ international partnerships with a commerce focus, and encourage in-depth knowledge of Maryland's strengths in key clusters around the world.
 - Utilize foreign offices and partners to help raise the profile of Maryland by providing them with specific marketing material and strategies.
 - Manage lead generation services covering all five of the State's top five FDI target markets, as well as lead generation services in secondary markets, as funding allows.
 - Work with partners to maintain, expand, and market new programs that can attract attention to Maryland as an innovative place to do business such as the Maryland Innovation Lab (WTCI and LMarks) and the Global Gateway Soft Landing Program (15+ Maryland incubators and accelerators).
 - Keep foreign offices up to date on latest information from Commerce/Maryland to ensure consistent state marketing and branding.
- Maximize direct outreach to targeted prospective investors from overseas.
 - Manage pipeline of potential leads from databases, foreign offices, and marketing efforts to effectively channel vetted leads within Commerce.
 - Maximize outreach at each trade show and event attended by the OIIT team and our partners.
 - Attend relevant events organized by embassies, industry associations, local jurisdictions and others where there is a high international attendance expected. Secure speaking roles, when possible, to improve Maryland's visibility.
 - Encourage and support visiting delegations of foreign companies from overseas to make a visit to Maryland. Capitalize on events that are occurring in Washington, D.C. to the extent possible.
 - Identify and attend FDI trade show and mission opportunities when budget allows, coordinating a Commerce team to execute in the most effective manner. In particular, work with the MD Department of Agriculture to target food and ag prospects at shows where MDA already has a presence, to minimize financial resource requirements.
 - Ensure Maryland's FDI lead generation contracts provide the required reporting and meet targets outlined in their agreements.

- Work closely with county and local economic development offices to support their FDI activities to maximize Maryland's reach.
- Provide customized assistance to identified prospects to win identified opportunities.
 - Keep up to date on new opportunities, locations, incentives and programs in the State of Maryland to provide effective programs and proposals for potential investors.
 - Build and maintain relationships with local jurisdictions, industry partners, and service providers to ensure quick and relevant responses to investor requests.
 - Build and maintain relationships with existing foreign investors, to maintain positive relationships, retain a high level of foreign investors in the state, and develop a network of companies that can serve as references to new investors.
 - Coordinate with the Office of Business Development for larger projects to allow for greater bandwidth and customized focus for smaller and medium sized investors, and to provide targeted support where needed on the larger projects.
 - Stay abreast of key political, economic, and cultural trends in target regions to appeal to country-specific concerns and interests.
 - Support network of 15+ Maryland business incubators and accelerators with funding, technical assistance, and marketing to build out their international attraction programs through the Global Gateway Soft Landing Program.
 - Provide direct support services (matchmaking, introductions) to foreign companies participating in the Global Gateway Soft Landing Program.

2. Increase exports from the State of Maryland into foreign markets around the world.

- Expand opportunities for Maryland companies to do business overseas.
 - Apply for and win the SBA's STEP (State Trade and Export Promotion) grant to provide additional funding to allow more companies to participate in international trade shows, carry out export marketing plans, and utilize the U.S. Department of Commerce's export services.
 - Organize and execute five to eight international trade shows and missions with delegations of six or more companies (depending upon SBA funding). Currently scheduled trade shows for 2025 include the Australia Avalon Air Show in March, InfoSecurity Europe in June, and Japan Health in June.
 - Coordinate with the Office of Strategic Industries to support additional major trade shows held in the U.S. to support Maryland companies seeking international business.
 - Manage the current network of 19 foreign offices to provide free consulting support for Maryland companies including identification of new opportunities.
 - Promote the reciprocal soft landing exchange program in foreign countries to allow Maryland companies to explore new markets while receiving free office space and local support from partners.
 - Engage local partners such as embassies, industry associations, and foreign business development agencies to be aware of incoming delegations and events that may present opportunities for Maryland companies. Distribute information about these events to potentially interested companies whenever feasible.

- Bring in foreign delegations to be hosted by Commerce and organize B2B meetings and/or networking receptions whenever possible to allow Maryland companies to engage directly with foreign buyers/partners at minimal cost to them.
 - Provide direct funding to companies to offset the costs of expanding into international markets through the ExportMD program.
 - Work with the Maryland Office of Tourism and the World Trade Center Institute (an OIIT grant recipient) to support tourism from foreign countries.
- Address barriers to export for Maryland companies.
 - Work with companies on a one-on-one basis to address export challenges through assistance from Baltimore-based and/or foreign offices.
 - Maintain relationships with federal agencies and/or relevant service providers to address challenges and provide a quick and efficient response to companies more easily.
 - Recommend and support advocacy concerning federal or international policy issues that negatively affect Maryland trade.
 - Assist companies who are not yet export-ready to access the necessary resources to be prepared for OIIT services by making referrals to the SDBC and others who offer this type of counseling.
- Promote the benefits of international trade to increase engagement in international export opportunities.
 - Promote exporting success stories and interesting articles on addressing export challenges to encourage businesses to consider exporting.
 - Carry out a series of informational sessions on export programs available to companies around the state, in partnerships with local jurisdictions and industry associations.
 - Work with local partners to develop topical information sessions.
 - Focus on opportunities to promote export opportunities to new communities, such as rural areas, disadvantaged groups, or previously overlooked industry sectors to engage more new-to-export companies.
 - Ensure other BISD staff at Commerce are kept up to date on OIIT's export offerings to allow them to include this information in their meetings and outreach to companies.
- Assess state policies and incentives that impact international trade and make recommendations when needed.
 - Provide feedback through appropriate channels when companies (foreign or local) run into barriers that could be addressed by the State.
 - Keep abreast of best practices used by other states and nations to support international investment and trade.
 - Provide input to the OPRGA and the Governor's office on federal and international policies that affect international trade.

3. Market Maryland internationally.

- Promote Maryland to foreign companies and organizations through the Commerce website, blog, print collateral, social media, and newsletters.

- Identify opportunities to promote foreign investment in Maryland and work with the marketing team to highlight positive stories.
- Work with the marketing team to ensure the “Why Maryland” message (and any other marketing messages implemented in future) translate well overseas, focusing particularly on comparison to top U.S. competitor markets and the “Gateway to U.S. Market” message.
- Ensure international content on the website and other outreach materials remains up to date and relevant.
- Identify new resources for promoting Maryland’s message overseas, particularly in the State’s five FDI target markets, such as international print and online publications, and exploring search engine optimization (SEO) in overseas markets.
- Engage consultants, foreign offices and international partners to promote Maryland’s marketing messages.
- Promote Maryland through direct engagement at events with high international attendance.
 - Attend several major international trade shows in the U.S. and abroad to meet with international companies and deliver the Maryland message. OIIT aims to outreach to approximately 30 prospects per major international show.
 - Maximize Commerce presence for minimum cost by engaging foreign offices, contractors and partners to deliver the Maryland message on OIIT’s behalf, at select shows within targeted industry sectors.
 - Lead Maryland’s participation at SelectUSA, the United States Government’s premier international event for foreign direct investment, including the development of a 2-day Spin-Off event to attract 50+ foreign companies to tour Maryland’s top assets.
 - Attend local events with high potential to meet foreign prospects and/or existing foreign investors and deliver the Maryland message, such as local or federal government events, Embassy events, industry association events and delegation visits arranged by third parties.
- Support International Business and Economic Development Activities.
 - Provide recommendations for trade and investment meetings and events, as well as related deliverables, that are appropriate for the Governor and Lt. Governor.
 - Provide information, briefings, and staff support upon request for trade and investment meetings and events led by the Governor or Lt. Governor.
 - Establish relationships between embassies, diplomatic officials, and State officials as needed to fulfill the State’s trade and investment needs and maintain Maryland’s visibility in the international arena.
 - Support requests made by the Secretary of State’s Office to support Sister-State programs and other meetings and events that require trade and investment expertise and/or support, including participation in the International Sub-Cabinet.

Department of the Environment

Secretary of the Environment Serena McIlwain and MDE staff will continue to prioritize international engagement around climate change in 2025. The agency will work with the Office of the Secretary of State and other agencies to deepen existing ties with China, Canada, South Africa and Brazil through new and existing MOUs, with a focus on building partnerships that strengthen economic investment in Maryland's climate commitments. MDE will also represent Maryland's climate leadership at the U.S. Climate Action Summit in Washington DC, Climate Week in New York City, and the 30th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on Climate Change (COP30) in Brazil. Through its ongoing membership in the global Under2 Coalition, United States Climate Alliance, Accelerating to Zero Coalition, Subnational Methane Action Coalition, and Zero Emissions and Resilient Buildings Accelerator, MDE will also seek additional opportunities build new partnerships with other leading subnational governments and make progress on shared clean energy and climate goals. Finally, in partnership with the Department of Budget and Management and Office of the Comptroller, MDE has joined a cohort of global subnational governments, led by the Climate Group, to evaluate "green budgeting" as a tool to further integrate Maryland state budgeting processes, climate finance, and administration priorities for greenhouse gas reduction.

Maryland Higher Education Commission

Higher Education Secretary Dr. Sanjay Rai and the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) staff will continue to attend the Subcabinet for International Affairs meetings and events. Additionally, we will continue partnering with the Office of the Secretary of State and other agencies to promote the importance of international study and exchange programs for Maryland students, and to engage students from across the globe who are interested in beginning or continuing their educational journeys in the U.S., encouraging them to come specifically to Maryland.

Department of Transportation

The Maryland Port Administration (MPA) will explore new business opportunities to expand trade lanes and services with Southeast Asia. New service lanes are expected to come online later this year from carriers calling the Port of Baltimore.

The MPA is supporting Ports America Chesapeake's effort to construct a grain transfer facility on site at Seagirt Marine Terminal. This effort would grow the agricultural business through the Port of Baltimore.

The MPA will attend the TPM Conference 2025 in Long Beach, California from March 2nd-5th. The TPM Conference is the top event for the global container shipping and logistics community.

The MPA will build upon the new long-term agreement with Carnival Cruise Lines signed in 2024 and look for new opportunities to grow the Cruise Maryland business by continuing conversations with major cruise lines and luxury brands.

MAA's International Affairs goal for 2025 Air Service Development is to expand international passenger and cargo air service.

The Maryland Aviation Administration plans to expand international passenger and cargo air service in 2025. We generally achieve this goal by attending international air service conferences to meet with many international airlines at once.

Maryland Military Department

In FY25, the Maryland National Guard's State Partnership Program (SPP) will continue to strengthen its long-standing relationships with Estonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina through a series of planned engagements mirroring FY24's successes. These include joint military training, cyber defense collaboration, medical and health exchanges, and leadership development opportunities. Notably, the Maryland National Guard will support Defender Europe 25 and Exercise Inherent Resolve, with the 115th Military Police Battalion deploying to Croatia in the spring. This deployment will focus on enhancing multinational military police operations and interoperability with NATO allies. Additionally, Maryland will maintain its emphasis on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) initiatives and fostering civilian-military collaboration, further demonstrating the program's dedication to strengthening global partnerships and promoting regional security.

Conclusion

As we conclude a year of meaningful progress and transformation for the Subcabinet for International Affairs, we stand at a critical juncture. The strategic groundwork and structural reforms the Subcabinet undertook in 2023 yielded strong results in 2024, and the Subcabinet’s dedication to building stronger cross-agency communication, collaboration, and coordination mechanisms among its members advances Maryland’s capacity to engage with international partners in the year to come. These advancements also position Maryland and the Moore-Miller Administration as a unified, efficient, and strategic entity in global affairs.

The Subcabinet’s mission is more urgent than ever. In 2025, the Subcabinet will redouble its efforts to propel Maryland’s lighthouse sectors – life sciences, quantum computing, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence (AI), aerospace, and defense – into global prominence. These sectors, reflected in Strategic Goals 2 and 3, are not just key to Maryland’s economic future, but vital to the State’s role in shaping the future of innovation and security on the world stage. An essential tool in Governor Moore’s “Asset Rich, Strategy Rich” agenda, the Subcabinet is committed to harnessing new opportunities for economic growth, advancing Maryland’s prominent, respected, and influential role in the global community for the benefit of Marylanders.

Through continued cross-agency collaboration, strategic communication, and an unwavering focus on impactful results, the Subcabinet will meet the challenges and opportunities of the coming year, in line with the values mission of the Moore-Miller Administration.



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee commending the opening of BioHealth Hub at Greencourt Innovation Center with Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich, State Senator Clarence Lam, Dr. Stephany Yu, and Dr. Bei Ma



Governor Moore joins business leaders at the Bisnow International Life Sciences Summit in North Bethesda in September and speaks at a fireside chat about government policy regarding life sciences growth

Appendix

Comprehensive Strategic Goal Activities in 2024

This section provides a comprehensive overview of the actions and achievements that have shaped Maryland's international engagement in 2024, organized under the goals set forth in the *2023-2027 Moore-Miller Administration Strategic Plan for International Affairs*.

Strategic Goal 1:

Maximize the Subcabinet for International Affairs to Increase Cross-Agency Collaboration and Promote the Policies of the Moore-Miller Administration Across the Globe.

With regular meeting cadence and communication tools established in 2023, the Subcabinet achieved a high level of participation and communication in 2024. The Subcabinet convened in March, July, and October of 2024, and the Staff Working Group met monthly. The Subcabinet achieved 100% participation in its meetings, and most of the Staff Working Group members achieved over 90% participation in their meetings, demonstrating the strong commitment of the participants at all levels.



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, Lieutenant Governor Aruna Miller, and staff in attendance at Governor's Subcabinet for International Affairs Quarterly Meeting, July 2024

Strategic Goal 2:

Strengthen Maryland's Economy by Supporting the Transportation Sector, Private Sector Investment in Strategic Industries, Inbound and Outbound Trade, and Access to New Markets Internationally.

Secretary of State

1. The Secretary of State's Office assisted the Office of the Lieutenant Governor in January with coordinating a reception with Maryland's Korean American community leaders to commemorate Governor Wes Moore's proclamation of Korean American Day in Maryland. In its 20th year, this reception continues a bipartisan tradition through four (4) gubernatorial administrations to recognize the contributions of Maryland's Korean American community and proclaim January 13th as Korean American Day in Maryland. 2005 is the same year of the passage of the Congressional resolution recognizing Korean American Day throughout the United States. Attendees included the Consul General of the Korean Embassy who provided remarks of appreciation for Governor Wes Moore and Lt. Governor Aruna Miller's leadership, OAH Chief Judge Chung Pak, Korean American members of the Governor's APA Commission (organized by GOCI), members of the Korean American media, the co-chair of the Maryland-Korea Sister State Committee and representatives of the Korean War Veterans association. Lt. Governor Aruna Miller was the recipient of an award presented by the Korea Information Association recognizing her support of immigrant communities and the Korean American community. The award was made of the barbed wire fence and shell casings between North and South Korea.
2. Special Assistant Alexandria Liu introduced the Commercial Consular of the Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye, Ms. Elif Gursoy, to Senior Manager of the Office of International Investment and Trade (OIIT), Department of Commerce Jessica Reynolds, in January in response to Ms. Gursoy's interest in the Global Gateway program.
3. In February, Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, Deputy Secretary Michael Lore, Special Assistant Alexandria Liu, Director of International Affairs Mary "Mendy" Nitsch, and Assistant Director of International Affairs Rosanna Mantova along with representatives of Department of Commerce and the Maryland-Kanagawa Sister State Committee met virtually with counterparts in Kanagawa Prefecture, Maryland's Sister State in Japan. The purpose of the virtual meeting was to initiate high-level relationships under the Moore-Miller Administration, receive updates on ongoing projects, and propose new areas of mutual engagement under the Sister States framework. Discussion included participating in reciprocal trade shows.
4. Director of International Affairs Nitsch met in February with the new Ambassador of Aruba Zulema Erasmus for an introductory conversation regarding their respective regions' subnational diplomacy objectives. The Ambassador is interested in the sectors of higher education collaboration, sports diplomacy, and a possible port to port partnership.

5. Deputy Secretary Michael Lore and Assistant Director of International Affairs Mantova met in February with a delegation of women business leaders from Kosovo, Serbia, and North Macedonia, in an engagement organized by the Congressional Office of International Leadership “COIL”. COIL connects delegates with their peers in U.S. communities to exchange best practices and strengthen mutual understanding. The courtesy visit, organized by the World Trade Center Institute, Baltimore, focused on the role of state government in the U.S. federalist system and the responsibilities of the OSOS.

6. Director of International Affairs Nitsch met with Ms. Cora (Corazon) Dones, a leader in the Filipino community in Maryland, in April to discuss ways to develop business connections between Maryland and the Philippines. Director of International Affairs Nitsch connected Ms. Dones with OIIT at the Department of Commerce.



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and staff meet with Zamfara State Governor Duada Lawal

7. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and Senior Advisor Gebhardt met with Nigeria's Zamfara State Governor Dauda Lawal and his delegation in April to discuss topics of mutual interest to Maryland and Zamfara. Governor Lawal, who lived in Maryland when he was younger, discussed his state's needs related to modern agriculture methods, mining technologies, educational exchange, and green energy.

8. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee met with a delegation led by Governor Alex Otti of Abia State, Nigeria in April. Other participants include Secretary of Commerce Kevin A. Anderson, Antwan Brown of GOCI, and the Chair of the Governor’s Commission on African Affairs.



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee meets with a delegation led by Gansu Province Vice Governor Zhang Jingang

9. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and her team met with the Vice Governor of Gansu Province in China and his delegation in April in Annapolis. Topics of mutual interest were discussed, and Gansu invited Secretary of State Lee and Maryland officials to come for a visit. Gansu is a large area in northwest China with a population of 24 million and is a leader in wind energy technology.

10. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and her team hosted an 8-member delegation from China's Fujian Province led by its Vice Governor Ms. Jiang Erxiong in May. Fujian Province is seeking closer ties with Maryland, primarily in the areas of student exchange, business (trade and investment), and tourism. Maryland is home to members of the Fujian diaspora, and Fujian's port city of Xiamen is a Sister City of Baltimore. A number of Maryland's Fujian diaspora members attended the meeting.



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and staff meet with Fujian Province Vice Governor Jiang Erxiong

11. Deputy Secretary Michael Lore, Director of International Affairs Nitsch, Assistant Director of International Affairs Mantova, and State Senator Charles Sydnor in May welcomed representatives of the Parliament of Ghana. Led by the Clerk of their Parliament, the delegation met for a three-day trip in May to gather best practices in developing and operating a parliamentary museum in Ghana to highlight their legislative history and democratic system of government. The Maryland agenda began with the leadership of Maryland Archives giving a tour of the State House. Maryland Center for History and Culture (MCHC) and the OSOS arranged for their private tour and meetings with leadership of the U.S. Capitol Building and Museum and the U.S. Naval Academy Museum.

12. In May, the OSOS worked with counterparts in South African Sister State KwaZulu Natal (KZN) to review the renewal of the Maryland-KZN Cooperation Agreement, which was in effect from 2015-2020. This effort, led by Senior Advisor Gebhardt and with support from Executive Assistant Bauer and Director of International Affairs Nitsch, included meetings with Senior Advisor to the KZN Premier (Governor) Neville Matjie, and President of nonprofit Sister States of Maryland, Inc. Dr. Jean Bailey. The renewed MOU is expected to include an emphasis on technical exchanges in the environment/ climate change sector and possibly equine exchange. An Action Plan for the execution of a renewed MOU was developed with input from the members for the Subcabinet for International Affairs.

13. In May, a high-level delegation led by the Deputy Party Secretary of Anhui Province, Maryland's Sister State in China since 1980, met with Deputy Secretary Michael Lore, Special Assistant Alexandria Liu, Director of International Affairs Nitsch, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Cassie Shirk, MDA Director of International Marketing Stone Slade, State Delegate Chao Wu, and members of the Maryland-Anhui Sister State committee to strengthen the Maryland-Anhui relationship, including in the areas of business exchange, the horse industry and tourism. Special Assistant Liu joined the Anhui Delegation in a meeting with the Baltimore Development Corporation prior to the Annapolis meeting, where the delegation's Commerce Department and private business representatives discussed business opportunities. Chinese-language materials developed by Department of Commerce and the Department of Agriculture were shared with the group, which were well received. A major item discussed was a global EV battery manufacturer's desire to work with the Port of Baltimore to implement a zero-carbon port strategy, similar to the work they are doing for the Port of Hefei, Anhui, and with 10 ports in the United States. This interest was shared with Secretary of Commerce Kevin A. Anderson and Hui-Min Tzeng of our Department of Commerce. Two other business opportunities were mentioned by the delegation; our Office will follow up to learn more and introduce the leads to the relevant agencies.

14. Assistant Director of International Affairs Mantova along with Hui-Min Tzeng of Department of Commerce attended the Korean International Trade Association (KITA) Networking Reception, hosted by the KITA Center in May in Washington, DC. This is the second year in a row that the OSOS and Commerce have attended the reception together. KITA is a well-known resource for MD Commerce and complements the Sister State partnerships with Gyeongnam and Jeollanam. KITA is the largest business organization in Korea.



Governor Wes Moore, Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, and Secretary of Commerce Kevin A. Anderson with South Australia Premier Peter Malinauska and Ambassador of Australia Kevin Rudd for the MOU signing

15. In May 2024, Gov. Moore joined State of South Australia Premier Peter Malinauskas and Ambassador of Australia Kevin Rudd (former Prime Minister of Australia) to renew an economic memorandum of understanding between Maryland and South Australia. The agreement — first signed in September 2019 and focused on collaboration in cybersecurity, small satellites and space — has been expanded to include testing ranges, workforce development and unmanned autonomous vehicles. The agreement will last three years, with the option to renew. In 2023, the Maryland Department of Commerce led a delegation of Maryland companies to various trade shows in Australia, including the Avalon Airshow and Indo-Pacific 2023. Commerce’s Office of International Trade and Investment also traveled to South Australia to meet with the Defense SA, South Australia’s lead government agency for the defense industry.



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and Staff attend the Welcome Ceremony for Brazil Tall Ship Cisne Branco

16. In May, Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, Deputy Secretary Michael Lore, and the Secretary’s team joined officials of the U.S. Navy, U.S. Coast Guard, and the Baltimore Mayor’s Office to welcome the Brazilian Navy tall ship, Cisne Branco, to Maryland during its goodwill trip. The State of Maryland has had a partnership MOU with the State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil since 1999. This was Cisne Branco’s second trip to Maryland. The ceremony was arranged by the non-profit Sail Baltimore, which is working alongside the Maryland 250 Commission to plan Maryland’s Sail250 event in 2026; SailBaltimore and its partners plan to raise \$5m to execute Maryland’s Sail250. Deputy Secretary Lore represented the State of Maryland at a second event onboard Cisne Branco, which was joined by several members of the U.S. armed forces and fulfilled active recruitment for members of the Rio De Janeiro Sister State Committee.

17. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee represented the Moore-Miller Administration in June at the Korean Embassy’s SelectUSA reception entitled U.S.-Korea Networking Reception: Building Synergy Through Strategic Partnership.

18. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, Deputy Secretary Michael Lore, Executive Assistant Bauer, Executive Research Assistant Kim, and Executive Research Assistant Kim met Irish Ambassador Geraldine Byrd Nason at Ireland's SelectUSA reception in June. Also in attendance was Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer, Special Secretary Martin, and Deputy Legislative Officer Fallon.



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and staff meet with the Ambassador Geraldine Byrne Nason of Ireland



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and staff meet with Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer

19. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee attended the Japanese Embassy's SelectUSA reception in June.

20. The OSOS hosted diplomats from Argentina and Colombia at two exhibition soccer matches in June at the NFL stadium in Prince George's County. These well-attended games (50,000) pitted Argentina against Guatemala and the United States against Colombia and grew out of diplomatic discussions a year earlier between the OSOS, Argentina's Ambassador to the U.S., and the Maryland Sports Commission. Exemplifying the OSOS's "sports diplomacy," Maryland's representatives included Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, Lt. Governor Aruna Miller, Higher Education Secretary Dr. Sanjay Rai, Service and Civic Innovation Secretary Paul Monteiro, Deputy Secretary Michael Lore, and SOS Senior Advisor Joseph Gebhardt. During the two soccer games, the Maryland representatives discussed economic, educational, and cultural topics with the attending Latin American diplomats and Maryland's Hispanic Chamber of Commerce leaders.



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and staff meet with Ambassador Laurent Bili of France at the 2024 Olympic Opening Ceremony Reception

21. Deputy Secretary Michael Lore attended an event related to the soccer match at the Argentine Embassy highlighting the Argentine business community, and he attended an event at the Colombian Ambassador's residence focused on sports diplomacy.

22. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, accompanied by her Executive Team and Division of International Affairs, in June met with a Maryland-based consultant and his business partner in China to discuss a potential visit of a delegation from Shandong Province, China, in late July. The proposed focus of the visit would be on emergency management as well as business and trade opportunities. The OSOS followed up with the appropriate State agencies about this proposed delegation.



Maryland Leaders meet with delegation of 32 CEOs of China Based Companies (Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, Secretary of Commerce Kevin A. Anderson, Secretary of Higher Education Dr. Sanjay Rai, Secretary of Labor Portia Wu, Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich, Representatives from the Maryland Department of Agriculture, Representatives of the Maryland Department of the Environment, and Chief Administrative Law Judge Chung K. Pak)

23. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee hosted a Summit in June including high-level representatives of Maryland state and local governments and 32 CEOs of China-based companies interested in expanding their businesses to Maryland. Secretaries, Deputy Secretaries, or other leadership of the following state agencies provided remarks and networked with attendees at this event: Secretary of State, Higher Education Commission, Department of Commerce, Department of Agriculture, Department of Labor, and Department of the Environment. The Montgomery County Executive and his staff also participated in the Summit. The OSOS will follow up with the CEOs regarding potential partnerships and assist in connecting them with other Maryland officials.



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and staff meet with Bosnia and Herzegovina's Minister of Foreign Affairs Elmedin Konaković and Bosnian Ambassador to the U.S. Sven Alkalaj

24. In July, Secretary of State Susan C. Lee met with a delegation from Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) led by Minister of Foreign Affairs Elmedin Konaković, along with Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the U.S. Sven Alkalaj. Also in attendance were members of the Maryland National Guard, the Maryland Bosnia and Herzegovina Exchange Council, and the OSOS staff members Deputy Secretary Michael Lore, Assistant Director of International Affairs Mantova, Senior Advisor Gebhardt, Executive Assistant Bauer, Executive Research Assistant Kim, Executive Research Assistant Kim, and Intern Wang. They discussed how Maryland and BiH can continue to strengthen their ties and engage in more civilian-to-civilian relations along with civilian-to-military exchanges. The Maryland Bosnia and Herzegovina Exchange Council mentioned a Diaspora Conference they are hosting and would like to invite a delegation from Maryland that they hoped would include the Governor. BiH would also like to open a Maryland House in Sarajevo (a Sister City) that would serve as a cultural center for Bosnian Americans and a meeting place for Maryland delegations when they visit. In addition, they would like to engage in a doctor exchange program through which doctors from BiH will go to Maryland to learn from Maryland universities, and doctors from Maryland will learn from theirs. The mayor of Sarajevo would like to form a partnership with Ocean City, Maryland, to include export initiatives along with labor initiatives.

25. Deputy Secretary Michael Lore and Assistant Director of International Affairs Mantova met in July with Charges d'Affaires of the Embassy of Ecuador Soledad Pena, and discussed trade and migrant worker

engagement as well as a potential delegation of Maryland representatives to Ecuador in December including possibly the Maryland Port Administration.



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, Secretary of Transportation Paul J. Wiedefeld, and Secretary of Small, Minority, and Women Business Affairs Maria Martinez attend the Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Gala

26. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and Deputy Secretary Michael Lore attended the Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Gala in July, where Secretary of State Lee delivered remarks on supporting international economic opportunities in Maryland, especially for Latin American investors. She also referenced the importance of promoting Maryland Hispanic businesses internationally.

27. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee hosted by request in July from the Department of Commerce, the China Council for the Promote of International Trade (CCPIT), an influential trade body that is overseen by China's Ministry of Commerce. The delegation was led by CCPIT Chairman Ren Hongbin and included leading business figures from China and the Minister of Commercial Affairs of the Embassy of China Lyu Jiang. In conjunction with Secretary of State Lee, Secretary of Agriculture Kevin M. Atticks, Secretary of the Environment Serena McIlwain, and the Deputy Secretary of Commerce met with the delegation and delivered remarks to promote Maryland as a place for investment. Chairman Ren expressed his hope to further bilateral opportunities between the State of Maryland and China. Mr. Lyu Jian, Economic Minister from the Embassy of China, welcomes more U.S. and Maryland trade missions to China, especially with focuses on environmental sustainability, education, and the equine industry. Secretary of State Lee was accompanied by Deputy Secretary Michael Lore, Special Assistant Alexandria Liu, Senior Advisor Gebhardt, and Executive Assistant Bauer.

28. Deputy Secretary Michael Lore and Brian Castleberry, Regional Manager of the OIIT at Department of Commerce, met with a seven-member delegation from the Social Enterprise Ethiopia (SEE) who came to Maryland to learn about business opportunities in Maryland in July. They discussed with the group their goal of enacting benefit corporation legislation modeled after Maryland's 2010 legislation sponsored by then-State Senator Jamie Raskin. The delegation also met with House Speaker Adrienne Jones to further their understanding of Benefit Corporations. Dr. Brown from GOCI joined as did Delegate Dana Jones to discuss their expertise with diaspora and businesses from Africa.

29. Secretary Lee and Executive Assistant Bauer attended the Embassy of Canada's reception with Prime Minister Trudeau and Ambassador Hillman on behalf of Governor Wes Moore in July. Ambassador Hillman expressed she would appreciate a follow up meeting with Governor Wes Moore and Secretary Lee when time allows. Deputy Secretary Michael Lore contributed to the briefing materials for Governor Wes Moore's meeting with Prime Minister Trudeau.



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and Commissioners of the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives meet with Mr. Le Quang Manh, Chairman of the Committee of Financial and Budgetary Affairs of the National Assembly of Vietnam

30. In July, Secretary of State Susan C. Lee met with a delegation led by Mr. Le Quang Manh, Chairman of the Committee of Financial and Budgetary Affairs of the National Assembly of Vietnam. Other guests included Christina Poy, Administrative Director of the Governor's Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs, members of the Commission, and the OSOS staff: Deputy Secretary Michael Lore, Senior Advisor Gebhardt, Special Assistant Alexandria Liu, Director of International Affairs Nitsch, Assistant Director of International Affairs Mantova, Executive Assistant Bauer, Executive Research Assistant Kim, Executive Research Assistant Kim, and Intern Wang. Conversation included an introduction to the broad spectrum of Maryland's international work, as well as its budget and finance mechanisms, especially in the legislature, the advancement of the U.S.-Vietnam partnership, and further strengthening the relationship between Vietnam and the State of Maryland. The delegation was in the United States for their annual exchange with the U.S. Congress. Deputy Secretary Lore and Special Assistant Liu received a briefing from the U.S. State Department's Vietnam Desk about this engagement and received feedback on items to emphasize in the meeting, including values of diversity in leadership, public service, and transparency.

31. Deputy Secretary Michael Lore welcomed a delegation from Nepal's Public Procurement Monitoring Office (PPMO) and other Nepalese procuring entities in August in Crownsville. Secretary Atif Chaudry of the Department of General Services (DGS) greeted the delegation via video. Representatives of DGS and Department of Transportation met with the delegation in person for the Value-Based Procurement Study Tour sponsored and organized by the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) to familiarize the approximately 10 delegates with best practices in procurement at the state level. Others providing remarks included Sonja Horgen, Manager for Global Programs, U.S. Trade and Development Agency and Ramkrishna Subedi, Secretary for the Public Procurement Monitoring Office of Nepal.

32. In August, the Executive Team and the Division of International Affairs met with Patrick Capurro, Chairperson of the Maryland-Hauts-de-France Sister State Committee, to discuss engaging with stakeholders in France, and leveraging the benefits of the Maryland-Palace of Versailles MOU signed in 2022.

33. Director of International Affairs Nitsch met with Senior Advisor to the Ambassador of the European Union Maeve O'Beirne, and State Outreach Liaison for the European Union Delegation Conor Gallagher in September to discuss the Ambassador's interest in meeting with Governor Wes Moore. Proposed topics include respective political agendas, strategic industries in Maryland, shared national security concerns, the EU's economic footprint in Maryland, and the Washington International Horse Show.

34. In August, Deputy Secretary Michael Lore made remarks at the “Invest Guinea” event at the request of Prince George’s Councilwoman Blegay held in New Carrollton where he discussed investment opportunities in Guinea with several ministers of Guinea as well as the chief of staff for the President. As a follow up to this event, Deputy Secretary Lore and Director of International Affairs Nitsch discussed with Councilwoman Blegay the reviving of Sister State relationships with Bong and Maryland counties in Liberia and perhaps elevating the relationship to the country level.

35. Deputy Secretary Michael Lore at the request of the Comptroller’s Office joined a meeting in August with the United States Latino American Chamber of Commerce (USLACC) Africa, which advocates for investment in Nigeria and Africa. The group is planning an event in September in Maryland focused on the African diaspora.

36. Deputy Secretary Michael Lore discussed in August ways to revitalize the cooperation and engagement between Maryland and our Sister State in Peru with a member of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce who helped to establish the relationship.



Deputy Secretary Michael Lore participating in the U.S. and Canada Leadership Program in Taiwan

37. Deputy Secretary Michael Lore participated in the U.S. and Canada Leadership Program trip to Taiwan, organized by Taiwan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), in September. He made excellent contacts with think tanks, companies, industry groups, educational entities, as well as with government officials during this trip. During a reception celebrating Taiwan’s cultural cuisine at the Twin Oaks Estate in

Washington, D.C., he discussed this trip, and other subjects related to trade, investment and cultural exchange with Representative Yui.

38. Deputy Secretary Michael Lore provided remarks in September at the Welcoming Ceremony for the Argentine Navy's tall ship *La Libertad* in Baltimore. Nonprofit Sail Baltimore arranged the event, and lunch was served onboard the ship afterwards with representatives from the U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard in attendance. Deputy Secretary Lore also attended a related evening reception where he engaged with Ambassador of Argentina to the United States Arguello, and the Embassy made a request that Governor Wes Moore meet with the Governor of Cordoba.



U.S.-INDIA SME Council's 2024 50 Incredible Inc. Celebration. Photo of Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, President and Chief Executive Officer Elisha Pulivarti, and Board Chairman and Founder Sudhakar Gande

39. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee provided remarks on Maryland's Sister State Program and highlighted Maryland's ideal investment climate in October at the U.S. – India SME Council's 2024 50 Incredible Inc. Celebration. Also in attendance were U.S. Small Business Administration District Director Larry Webb, Higher Education Secretary Dr. Sanjay Rai, and Maryland's former Deputy Secretary of State under the O'Malley Administration Dr. Rajan Natarajan.

40. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee provided welcome remarks in October at the 2024 Washington International Forum on Innovation and Cooperation hosted by the U.S.-Sino Innovation Alliance (USIA), attended by prominent members of Maryland's Chinese American business community as well as a delegation from China. Panel topics included: Climate and Low Carbon Development: Policy and tech, Latest Advancements in Health and Life Science, The challenges of AI and ML application in advanced innovation, The Future and Challenges on Digital Economics, and Introduction to Business Collaboration Opportunities in U.S. and China. Also in attendance was Minister Counselor Guolin Zhou of the Science and Tech Section of the Embassy of the PRC, Deputy Chief of the CCPIT Representative Office in the USA Jianying Zhao, Montgomery County Executive Elrich, Delegate Lily Qi, Delegate Chao Wu, and Senior Regional Manager at Department of Commerce Hui-Min Tzeng. The following day, Deputy Secretary Michael Lore, Director of International Affairs Nitsch and Assistant Director of International Affairs Mantova met with a delegation from the USIA to discuss Maryland's foreign direct investment

initiatives, including the Global Gateway Program within the Department of Commerce designed to support international companies entering the market.

41. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and members of her Executive and International Teams met with a five-member delegation from Anhui Province, Maryland's Sister State in China, in November in Annapolis. The delegation was led by Mr. Wu Bin, Legislative Affairs Chair, Anhui Provincial People's Congress and Ms. Wang Haixia, Vice Chair, Hefei Municipal People's Congress. The formal discussion centered on the importance of continuing to support routine exchanges between the two regions. Anhui affirmed their commitment to Maryland on the renewal of our Sister State Cooperation Agreement, which will reach its 45th year anniversary next year. Maryland community members attended the meeting as well, including those affiliated with GOCI, TEDCO, and the Maryland-Anhui Sister State Committee.



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and staff hosted a delegation from the Anhui Provincial People's Congress led by Chairman of the Working Committee of Legislative Affairs, Mr. Wu Bin

42. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee met with Minister Qiu Wenxing from the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Annapolis in December. The meeting, attended by key members of the Secretary's team, focused on strengthening Maryland-China relations, particularly in business and educational exchanges. Minister Qiu extended an invitation for Secretary of State Lee to visit China in 2025, with a potential focus on the CIIE tradeshow. Secretary of State Lee emphasized Maryland's interest in attracting foreign direct investment, particularly in environmental sustainability, life sciences, and student exchanges. Minister Qiu expressed the Embassy's full support in maximizing business opportunities for Maryland, especially in the competitive Chinese market. The discussion also highlighted the 45th anniversary of Maryland's Sister State relationship with Anhui, China in 2023, and explored potential investments from Anhui-based companies. Minister Qiu offered to support the expansion of the trip and engagement with additional provinces and companies.

43. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee met in December with CEO Eddie Resende and VP for Business Development Jeremy Rosendale of the World Trade Center Institute, Baltimore (WTCI) to discuss greater collaboration between the OSOS and WTCI on international business matters in 2025. Topics included collaborating with OSOS in future WTCI events with foreign countries, as well as connecting WTCI to future activities of the Subcabinet for International Affairs. Eddie and Jeremy were invited to attend a future Subcabinet meeting as guests. Attendees included Deputy Secretary of State Michael Lore, Senior Advisor Gebhardt, Director of International Affairs Nitsch, and Executive Assistant Bauer.

44. Members of the Executive Team and the Division of International Affairs met with their counterparts in Hauts-de-France for their regularly scheduled bilateral meetings throughout the year. These meetings also included representation from the Department of Commerce, the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC), and the Maryland-HdF Sister State Committee. Highlights of the meetings included equine professional and student exchange, the Global Gateway program, education exchange, and planning for the renewal of the Sister State agreement, up for renewal in 2025. HdF is potentially planning a mission to Maryland in October 2025.



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and Department of Veterans and Military Families Secretary Anthony Woods with the Ukraine Veteran Services Delegation



Governor Wes Moore, Lt. Governor Aruna Miller, and Cabinet Secretaries at the Diwali Celebration

Lieutenant Governor

1. Lt. Governor Aruna Miller serves on the Maryland Economic Council (MEC). During the MEC meeting, Lt. Governor Miller focuses on the importance of bringing and retaining businesses and workforce development to meet the 21st century needs of the workforce.



Lt. Governor Aruna Miller pictured with Dr. David Wilson, President of Morgan State University; Dr. Hongtao Yu, Provost and Senior Vice President of Morgan State University; Dr. Robert C. Hampshire, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology and Chief Science Officer at the USDOT; Brandy Savarese, Associate Director of the National Transportation Center and the SMARTER Center; and Dr. Mansoureh Jeihani, Director of the SMARTER Center and the National Transportation Center at Morgan State University

2. Since the collapse of the Key Bridge on March 26, Lt. Governor Miller has dedicated her efforts to address the recovery and salvage operations of the Key Bridge. Lt. Governor Miller was appointed by Governor Wes Moore to be the Chair of the Francis Scott Key Bridge Intergovernmental Economic Response Team. As chair, Lt. Governor Miller has worked in collaboration with local, state, and federal leaders to provide the necessary resources and aid for businesses and port workers affected by this crisis.

3. On July 29, Lt. Governor Miller visited the Gordie Howe International Bridge. The Gordie Howe International Bridge is a six-lane bridge that crosses the Detroit River, connecting the City of Detroit to Windsor, Ontario. The bridge is currently under construction, but when completed, it will be the longest cable-stayed bridge in North America, spanning 1.5 miles. As a transportation engineer and chair of the Francis Scott Key (FSK) Bridge Intergovernmental Economic Response Team, it was important for Lt. Governor Miller to visit the Gordie Howe International Bridge as the Moore-Miller Administration looked ahead to securing federal funding to rebuild the FSK Bridge after its collapse on March 26.

During the visit, Lt. Governor Miller met with representatives of the Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority, which manages both the construction and future operation of the Gordie Howe International Bridge. The bridge is estimated to cost \$4.7 billion to build. The federal government of Canada is primarily responsible for financing the project, utilizing a 36-year Design-Build-Finance-Operate-Maintain concession to spread the total costs over a 36-year period.

The Gordie Howe International Bridge will have a significant economic impact, as nearly 30% of the \$950 billion trade between the U.S. and Canada passes over the Detroit River. Additionally, an estimated 6,000 workers cross the border every day, and over 250,000 jobs in Michigan depend on trade and investment between the U.S. and Canada.

Similarly, the Francis Scott Key (FSK) Bridge was a four-lane bridge that spanned 1.6 miles, extending over the Patapsco River into the Port of Baltimore. Before its collapse, the FSK Bridge had an annual traffic volume of 11.3 million vehicles and served more than 30,000 daily commuters. The FSK Bridge was the second-longest continuous truss bridge span in the United States and the third-longest in the world. With an estimated annual global economic impact of over \$70 billion, the Port of Baltimore remains a vital local, national, and international economic hub. The White House initially approved over \$60 million to cover response operations, debris removal, and recovery support.

As part of efforts to secure full funding for rebuilding the FSK Bridge, Governor Moore and Lt. Governor Miller hosted members of Congress to discuss the environmental and global economic impacts of the collapse. Among those who visited the salvage and wreckage operations were Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi and Senator Tom Carper, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works. The 118th Congress approved full federal funding to cover 100% of the rebuilding costs for the FSK Bridge.

4. Lt. Governor Aruna Miller served as a liaison between the Embassy of Türkiye and the Department of Commerce to facilitate connections through Maryland's Global Gateway Program.

Department of Agriculture



Lt. Governor Aruna Miller at the Key Bridge Precision Cutting Event

1. Participated in the SUSTA annual meeting to determine which markets Maryland will target in 2024.

2. Working with the Port of Baltimore and Department of Commerce to find a location for a grain export company at the Port.

3. In February 2024, MDA met with a grain exporter and set up two meetings with grain facilities in the state. The exporter is interested in working with companies that can load shipping containers with commodities for export through the Port of Baltimore to and Southeast Asia. They are particularly interested in food-grade wheat and soybeans in Maryland. In addition, the exporter expressed interest in obtaining their own facility at the port and is in the process of looking at locations.

4. Outreach and discussions with agricultural operations that export from the Baltimore Port took place to determine impact and necessary assistance.

5. See Strategic Goal 2, OSOS, Item #23.

6. See Strategic Goal 2, OSOS, Item #27.

7. MDA assisted Department of Commerce in hosting an information session for prospective companies interested in exhibiting at the China International Import Expo. In addition, representatives from the Chinese Embassy and Department of Commerce's office in China gave presentations on the Chinese market and potential opportunities for expansion and collaboration on partnerships.

8. In July, Secretary of Agriculture Kevin M. Atticks participated in a meeting with the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT). Secretary of State Susan C. Lee hosted this meeting with the SOS office and Department of Commerce. Agricultural trade was discussed, and new contacts were established.

In addition, MDA and the head of the Seafood Marketing Advisory Commission presented and networked with a select group from the CCPIT delegation in a meeting in Washington, DC. Topics included a Maryland agricultural overview, potential trade, and Maryland blue catfish.

9. In August, Deputy Secretary Steve Connelly presented to the Sister States of Maryland on international activities and collaborations. These included meetings with County Cork Ireland, hosting students from Bourbourg UFA, and The Maryland-Anhui Sister State Committee's "Best of Maryland-Anhui Agriculture Cooperation Showcase" at the Lantern Festival Fair and Show.

Department of Commerce

1. Attended ExpoDefensa Trade Show in Colombia with 4 Maryland companies. Maryland's Colombia office set up multiple one-on-one meetings with potential customers for each Maryland company. The Department of Commerce team also met with over 20 potential investment leads.

2. The Department of Commerce participated in the Rebuilding Ukraine event to support MD companies interested in exporting products and services to support the rebuilding of Ukraine, such as infrastructure projects.

3. The Department of Commerce participated in the U.S. Commercial Service's nationwide virtual ExportTech event to support participating MD companies with developing their export strategies.

4. Round 4 of the Global Gateway Program closed, with 47 new applications, which are in the process of being approved for funding and matched to incubator partners.

5. The Maryland Innovation Lab opened applications for the first cohort of companies interested in participating to develop innovative solutions to the food industry.

6. Department of Commerce has secured exhibit space for the annual SelectUSA Summit and finalized the dates for the related Maryland Spin-Off event.

7. Export Outreach Event planned for January as part of the MAPIT alliance to inform companies in Prince George's County about the full range of export resources available to support their international growth.

8. In January 2024, the Department of Commerce presented to an audience of approximately 50 businesses about export resources in MD, from the state, federal, and local level to encourage exporting.

9. Attended Arab Health Trade Show for medical technology in Dubai; took a delegation of nine companies, many of whom were funded by our ExportMD and STEP funds. Already confirmed \$100k+ export sale from a company that attended with the delegation.

10. See Strategic Goal 2, OSOS, Item #3.

11. Promoted Maryland and attended the Singapore Air Show, together with 8 Maryland exporters and set up meetings for each exporter through Department of Commerce Singapore office. As a side event, presented to a group of ~300 Singaporean businesses about investing in Maryland, highlighting the Global Gateway Program and the SelectUSA Spin-off event.

12. In April, the agency hosted a two-day visit from representatives of Maryland's trade office in Japan. Their agenda included one-on-one meetings with Maryland companies to provide counseling for exporting to Japan.

13. See Strategic Goal, OSOS, Item #8.

14. The Department of Commerce hosted a delegation of 10 Vietnamese companies across all sectors. The program included discussion of what OIIT offers for foreign companies looking to expand into Maryland, the State's key sectors, and the Global Gateway Program.

15. See Strategic Goal 2, OSOS, Item #15.

16. In May, round 5 of Global Gateway Funding closed and the team is working with applicants to bring serious new prospects into the program.

17. The State's STEP grant was submitted to secure \$550,000 in funding to promote exports to diverse companies around the state. This program allows us to offer additional ExportMD grant funding to Maryland companies and support more small companies for attendance at overseas trade shows.

18. A new round of Global Gateway funding was opened to align with major summer activities including InfoSecurity Europe and SelectUSA.

19. Maryland Export Day was sponsored to promote Maryland exporters and celebrate international business within the state.

SelectUSA Summit and Spin-off Events:

Maryland's Spin-Off Event is an annual two-day tour for potential foreign investors to familiarize themselves with the state while in town for the SelectUSA Summit. The Department of Commerce coordinated an Innovation-themed spin-off with all 60+ participants joining one agenda on the first day and then splitting into 3 industry-focused groups on day two for a total of 4 different day-long agendas that included visits in 7 counties.

The Summit featured Maryland's largest ever booth, which was also one of the largest on the show floor, matched only by Ohio. Counties were invited to co-exhibit for the first time with Frederick, Charles, and Howard Counties, as well as GBC representatives of the Baltimore region welcomed into our booth. In addition, Montgomery and Prince George's Counties exhibited on their own next to the Maryland booth,

and delegates were sent from Anne Arundel, St. Mary's, and Harford Counties. The Department of Commerce team held over 122 meetings across 3 days, as well as attended seven side events with foreign delegations from key markets: PGEDC's reception featuring the Mexico delegation, Canada, Japan, UK, Germany, Netherlands, and China.

Department of Commerce also hosted two of our foreign offices during this time period: our China office and our Korea office. Each representative met with approximately 15 Maryland companies to present opportunities within their respective markets for expansion overseas.

See below under Goal 3 about transportation connection with the Maryland Innovation Lab.

20. See Strategic Goal 2, OSOS, Item #23.

21. In July, OIIT closed the summer round of funding for the Global Gateway program. We had 20 applicants, of whom 12 applied as a result of exposure to Maryland during the SelectUSA events. The past month has been focused on approving those applications and moving them towards landing in Maryland.

22. In July, together with the Maryland Partners in International Trade, the Department of Commerce held an "All About Exporting" event to promote export programs to new and existing exporters in Harford County.

23. In July, OIIT met with several partners in DC to discuss ongoing collaboration and opportunities: KOTRA and KAPAL (Korea) and TECRO (Taiwan).

24. See Strategic Goal 2, OSOS, Item #27.

25. Worked with the OSOS on the Ethiopian delegation visit described above. (See Strategic Goal 2, OSOS, Item #28.)

26. In August, OIIT met with the Economic Counselor from the Jordanian Embassy to discuss an incoming visit from King Abdullah II and begin planning for a visit in September.

27. In August, OIIT met with both the U.S. and Tanzanian Ambassadors to discuss interest in ongoing collaboration including an incoming delegation in September and potential opportunities for 2025.

28. In August, OIIT attended the Bora Pharmaceuticals ribbon cutting with Secretary of Commerce Kevin A. Anderson, an acquisition by a Taiwanese company of Maryland's Emergent BioSolutions South Paca Street facility in Baltimore City. This acquisition represents a new foreign investor in Maryland. Other attendees included Secretary of State Susan C. Lee.

29. In September, OIIT participated in a mini expo held at the TAC with Canadian companies, to promote our FDI services and Maryland as a location for business.

30. In September, OIIT attended the Holland on the Hill networking event hosted by the Dutch Embassy in DC to promote Maryland.

31. In September, OIIT received notification that our SelectUSA Spin-Off event proposed for May was approved. This event aims to host more than 50 vetted foreign investors and focus on innovation.

32. In September, the Maryland Innovation Lab will have their demo day which wraps up the first cohort focused on Sustainable Food. A final report for cohort one is being drafted this fall. Over the past month, there were substantial updates to the marketing and the website for this program, which can be found at <https://marylandinnovationlab.com/>. The partners are currently recruiting sponsors for the second cohort focused on supply chain and logistics.

33. In September, OIIT hosted a delegation of over 20 business and government representatives from the Embassy of Tanzania and the Tanzanian American Chamber of Commerce. The program included a tour of the Port, a business roundtable with Maryland companies, and a reception.

34. In September, OIIT presented at the Maryland African Chamber of Commerce Business Seminar and Exhibition to promote the agency's international trade services to this business group made up of minority businesses.

35. OIIT was awarded a State Trade and Export Promotion (STEP) grant from the SBA in the amount of \$550,000 for a grant period beginning September. This grant is issued to state economic development agencies to support the growth of exports.

36. OIIT is the coordinating office for the new Irish Trade Commission. Early work for the set-up of this new commission is underway.

37. In October, Department of Commerce presented at the Korean American Professional Association of Life Sciences annual conference in Gaithersburg, MD to promote Maryland as a place to invest to an audience of Korean and Korean American life sciences companies.

38. Department of Commerce attended the AdvaMed hosted MedTech Conference in October, in Toronto, Canada as part of an FDI focused mission to Canada. The conference gathered 4,350 attendees from 48 countries. Commerce met one on one with 16 different companies in Ontario identified as interested in expanding into the U.S. In addition, Commerce met with staff from the Government of Ontario to explore renewing the Maryland-Ontario MOU that expired in 2023.

39. Department of Commerce attended the MEDICA Trade Fair in November 2024. We had a delegation of 11 Maryland companies that opted to participate in Medica in order to reach international markets. Secretary of Commerce Kevin A. Anderson led the delegation, and met with over two dozen potential FDI prospects, including one of the largest defense companies in Germany, Rhein-Metall. The team also hosted a special event with 7 European life sciences clusters to promote Maryland on a larger scale.

40. Department of Commerce also coordinated the state's inaugural participation at the China International Import Expo (CIIE). At this show, 7 Maryland companies exhibited, and we also had an 8th Maryland company participate in delegation activities. Early results include 3 company-level MOUs/ announced collaborations and some solid leads for several of the participants. Commerce participated in speaking opportunities during the show to promote the state, with focus on life sciences. After CIIE, Commerce further engaged the China market in various FDI activities. Meetings were held with government partners in Suzhou, Nanjing, Jinan, Shanghai, and Hefei to increase exposure of Maryland as a diverse and inclusive state. Commerce also met with Chinese businesses of various sectors and multiplier contacts to showcase the Maryland "brand" as one of the most dynamic industry clusters in Life Science and Biotech, agriculture/foods, cleantech, logistics, etc. in the USA. Some noteworthy FDI leads include the Anhui-

based biogas company which previously met with the Secretary of State and Secretary of Agriculture, and a company in the medical field.

41. In December, Governor Wes Moore issued a press release about Department of Commerce's Soft Landing Exchange Program, which went live with applications to allow Maryland companies more opportunities to access international markets through a network of vetted international partners.

42. In December, the Department of Commerce hosted a meeting with 10 counties and local organizations to present opportunities around attending the SelectUSA Summit and working with Commerce to maximize the State's presence.

43. In December, the Department of Commerce provided Anne Arundel County with guidance around how they can expand their efforts around FDI at a county level.

44. In December, the Department of Commerce met with a major FDI prospect from India in the life sciences sector. Maryland is on the shortlist for consideration along with 4 other states.

45. The Department of Commerce hosted our Canadian Rep office in Maryland in November and 10 Maryland companies had the opportunity to meet with and receive counseling from our in-market experts.

46. See Goal #2, MDA, Item #5.

Department of the Environment



Governor Wes Moore signs Environmental Education Executive Order 01.01.2024.15 with Secretary of the Environment Serena McIlwain, Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, and Secretary of Natural Resources Joshua E. Kurtz

1. Met with national and global vehicle manufacturers to advance the state's electric vehicle goals and advance new private-public partnerships.
2. In July, Secretary of the Environment Serena McIlwain participated in meetings with China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT), an influential trade body that is overseen by China's Ministry of Commerce. The delegation leader, Mr. REN Hongbin, Chairman of CCPIT, was joined by members of the organization, leading business figures from China, and Minister of Economy LYU Jiang from the Chinese embassy. The Secretary is continuing to explore with Commerce ongoing conversations and connections with members of the delegation who expressed interest in green business/trade opportunities with Maryland. (See Goal 2, OSOS, Item #23.)
3. During Secretary of the Environment Serena McIlwain's climate delegation trip to China in September [more under Goal 4], she advanced conversations with two clean energy companies interested in doing business in Maryland. With support from Department of Commerce, Maryland China Center, and the University of Maryland Center for Global Sustainability, Secretary of the Environment McIlwain set up one-on-one meetings and emphasized the Moore-Miller Administration's interest in partnering with these companies to advance solar and biogas solutions in Maryland to advance our twin economic and climate goals.
4. See Goal 2, MDA, Item #5.
5. See Goal 2, OSOS, Item #27.

Maryland Higher Education Commission

1. Higher Education Secretary Dr. Sanjay Rai and Secretary of Transportation Paul J. Wiedefeld met to discuss how the higher education segment can provide meaningful input into the Key Bridge redevelopment discussion.
2. It was agreed that the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) would take the lead to convene four institutions (College Park, Johns Hopkins, Morgan State, and UMBC) to discuss what that engagement would look like with respect to academic curriculum lessons and bridge construction modernization planning for the institutions to learn “best practices” and offer students real-life applications.
3. See Goal 2, MDA, Item #5.
4. See Goal 2, OSOS, Item #23.

Department of Transportation



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and Secretary of Transportation Paul J. Wiedefeld at the State of the Ports and Global Flavor Showcase held by the World Trade Center Institute

1. The Maryland Port Administration (MPA) will plan to meet with a delegation from Aruba to discuss collaboration opportunities in 2024 and a potential sister port agreement.
2. In February 2024, the Maryland Transportation Authority Police hosted a Japanese delegation from an Estonian technology company. The group observed how their products are utilized by end-users in law enforcement.

3. The Maryland Port Administration (MPA) hosted a delegation from the Balkans (Kosovo, Serbia and North Macedonia) in February. The delegation included seven government, academia, and non-profit leaders in business and economics. The group was participating in a week-long Open World Program sponsored by the Congressional Office for International Leadership in Washington, D.C.
4. The Maryland Port Administration (MPA) attended the TPM24 Conference in Los Angeles, California in March. TPM is the largest conference for the trans-Pacific and global container shipping and logistics community and serves to bring together U.S. ports and ocean carriers.
5. The Port Authority of Jamaica reached out to check in on the status of a sister port agreement. MPA will review internally with the new Executive Director and Department of Transportation.
6. The MPA will host port and logistics officials from Kazakhstan through the U.S. Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program and World Trade Center Institute. This group consists of five participants, including the director of a state-owned logistics enterprise, the director of a Kazakh port on the Black Sea, and three leaders of Caspian Sea ports. The tour will focus on operations, best practices and collaboration among ports.



Representatives of the Maryland Port Administration met with a delegation from the Incheon Metropolitan Council from South Korea, October 2024

7. In October, the MPA hosted Chairman Vo Tan Duc of the Dong Nai Province in Vietnam to discuss infrastructure and operations goals at seaports. In October, the MPA hosted a delegation from the Incheon Metropolitan Council (South Korea) to discuss port operations and best management practices.

8. MPA coordinated with the Council on Foreign Relations for a Port of Baltimore tour in July 2024 for members of their Stephen Kellen Term Member Program.
9. Condor restarted seasonal service from BWI to Frankfurt in May.
10. Air Canada published the return of flights from BWI Marshall to Toronto-Pearson starting May 2025.
11. At the request of the USDOT Secretary's Office of International Transportation and Trade, the Maryland Port Administration (MPA) will host a delegation from Brazil (including public officials and executives) through the "Infraleaders" program in September.



BWI-Thurgood Marshall CEO Ricky Smith was joined by BermudAir CEO Adam Scott at the inaugural arrival and ribbon cutting ceremony with BermudAir

Strategic Goal 3:

Establish Maryland as the Acknowledged Leader and Epicenter of Life Sciences, Bluetech and Greentech, Cybersecurity, Emerging Technologies, Quantum Computing, Artificial Intelligence, and Innovation.

Secretary of State



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and staff meet with representatives from an Anhui-based biogas company and Commissioner Dr. Ping Lu of the Governor's Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs

1. The OSOS facilitated multiple meetings this year between executives of a global supplier of electric transit and school buses and the Department of Commerce, Department of the Environment, and Department of Transportation. The company is interested in supplying electric vehicles to meet Maryland's electric vehicle procurement goals and potentially building a service center in Maryland to serve its east coast clients. The company delivered public transportation units to jurisdictions within Maryland this year and is in the process of becoming certified with Department of Transportation to supply school buses.
2. A company specializing in biogas and carbon capture technology based in Anhui Province (Maryland's Sister State in China) has serious interest in opening a manufacturing facility in Maryland. This would be its first venture in the United States. Our Office met with representatives to receive a technical overview of the Company's offerings and introduced them to the Department of Commerce and the Department of the Environment. An invitation was made for Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, her team members, and other

Maryland officials to travel to Anhui to visit the company's headquarters, and Secretary of the Environment Serena McIlwain visited the company on the sidelines of a U.S.-China subnational climate conference this year.

3. Director of International Affairs Nitsch and Assistant Director of International Affairs Mantova participated in a virtual meeting in February connecting cybersecurity academics from UMBC and two leading cybersecurity universities in Estonia, the Universities of Tallinn and Tartu. The meeting culminated in an agreement to immediately exchange syllabi and to draft an MOU among the universities this spring including student and scholar exchange and collaboration in R&D. Representatives from the Estonian embassy in DC and the Department of Commerce international division also participated.

4. In February, Deputy Secretary Michael Lore, Special Assistant Alexandria Liu, and Director of International Affairs Nitsch met with a group of Maryland-based IT professionals to receive information on the proposed international workforce development initiative the group would like to undertake. The initiative seeks to identify partners in a Caribbean country to train locals in IT skills and potentially provide these IT services to Maryland State entities.

5. In May, Director of International Affairs Nitsch met in November with the CEO of a digital healthcare startup offering an FDA Class II-listed remote therapeutic monitoring (RTM) solution for musculoskeletal conditions, along with the company's U.S.-based manager. The meeting was a follow up to the in-person introduction with Secretary of State Susan C. Lee at the Korean American Professionals in Life Sciences (KAPAL) conference several weeks ago. The company would like to expand access to musculoskeletal care within the public health system. Director of International Affairs Nitsch introduced the company to the Department of Health and Department of Commerce.

6. In May, Secretary of State Susan C. Lee recorded Keynote remarks at the request of a Maryland AAPI community leader and TEDCO member to commemorate the 2024 International Family and Community Health Innovation Forum in Shanghai.

7. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee provided recorded remarks for the Chinese Biopharmaceutical Association's June Conference in Suzhou, China. The CBA is one of the largest Chinese American life sciences professional associations in the U.S. and brings together leaders of the biopharmaceutical industry, internationally renowned scientists, business leaders, and guests from China.

8. Deputy Secretary Michael Lore met with representatives of Taiwan's life sciences, artificial intelligence, semiconductor, green energy, and defense technology industries during his trip to Taiwan in August, where he profiled Maryland as a leader in quantum computing, especially related to developments in national security and life science applications. He also met with the Ministry of Economic Affairs' Taiwan-USA Industrial Cooperation Promotion Office and discussed Maryland's interests in high-tech sectors.

9. In August, Deputy Secretary Michael Lore discussed with stakeholders in Taiwan the opportunities for chip manufacturing in Maryland, emphasizing training engineers at institutions of higher education. Deputy Secretary Lore highlighted Maryland's skilled workforce and the opportunities that exist in the Maryland market for this sector area development.

10. In November, Secretary of State Susan C. Lee provided opening remarks at the Korean American Professional Association of Life Sciences (KAPAL) 8th Annual Conference, which was cohosted with the Korean Innovation Center (KIC-DC), Korean American Scientists and Engineers Association (KSEA-DC), and Korean Life Scientist Association of Maryland (KLAM). Attended by scientists, innovators, entrepreneurs, investors, and government officials from all over the United States and South Korea, the conference covered topics such as: academic and private sector partnerships in the biotechnology and healthcare fields; the latest gene therapy approaches for neurodevelopmental disorders; related regulatory processes, including FDA's Investigational New Drug application (IND) and medical device clearance and approval; clinical trials operations; Artificial Intelligence in drug development; strategies in U.S. intellectual property protection; the PIE Act; trends in the U.S. innovation ecosystem; investment at the "Intersection of Medicine"; and other timely issues. Our Office has since followed up with innovators, entrepreneurs, and investors interested in connecting with relevant state agencies and in locating their operations in Maryland. Also in attendance were Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich and OAH Chief Judge Chung Pak (who, prior to his current position, served as an Administrative Law Judge for the U.S. Patent Trial & Appeal Board and rendered decisions on complex patent issues and disputes relating to state-of-the-art technologies).

11. A company specializing in biogas and carbon capture technology based in Anhui Province (Maryland's Sister State in China) has serious interest in opening a manufacturing facility in Maryland. This would be its first venture in the United States. Our Office met with representatives to receive a technical overview of the Company's offerings and introduced them to the Department of Commerce and the Department of the Environment. An invitation was made for Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, her team members, and other Maryland officials to travel to Anhui to visit the company's headquarters, and Secretary of the Environment Serena McIlwain visited the company on the sidelines of a U.S.-China subnational climate conference this year.

12. In May, OSOS met with representatives of the Maryland-Anhui Sister State Committee and a renewable energy company to learn about the group's plans to establish a solar farm in Maryland. Our Office facilitated introductions to the Department of Agriculture, Department of the Environment, Department of Energy, and Department of Planning, and with Montgomery County Executive Elrich.

13. See Strategic Goal 4, OSOS, Item #11.

14. See Strategic Goal 5, OSOS, Item #13.

15. See Strategic Goal 5, Lt. Governor, Item #4.

16. Secretary Lee, Executive Assistant Bauer, Intern Naomi Kim, and Intern Natalie Kim attended a meeting hosted by the Montgomery County Executive's Office welcoming the Mayor of Daejeon Korea Lee Jang-Woo. Mayor Lee's trip aims to facilitate the entry of businesses in Korea to the U.S. market and enjoyed his one day stay in Maryland touring the National Food and Drug Administration and the National Institutes of Health. Daejeon is largely advertised as the 'City of Science' in Korea and has a reputation as Korea's 'high-tech HQ'; home to KAIST National Research University, Daedeok Science Town, and many companies from sectors of bio, aerospace, and information technology. Also attending the meeting were Maryland Korean-American CEOs and Chief Judge Pak, as well as the CEOs of large companies located

in Daejeon and press from South Korea. Mayor Lee encourages Governor Moore, Secretary Lee, and other members of the Cabinet to visit them in Daejeon when the time allows.

Lieutenant Governor



Lt. Governor Aruna Miller and Secretary of Commerce Kevin A. Anderson attend the Maryland Aerospace Day Reception

1. As Chair of the Aerospace States Association, Lt. Governor Aruna Miller convened aerospace industry leaders in February to explore opportunities for Maryland to strengthen its aerospace workforce through partnerships with federal agencies and private entities. Maryland is home to 9,600 aerospace and defense businesses, which contribute \$37.8 billion annually to the state's economy and secure \$11.5 billion in federal contracts. Lt. Governor Miller is dedicated to fostering a diverse and inclusive workforce, with a particular focus on empowering women and people of color within the industry. She brought together aerospace leaders and students from Maryland's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and community colleges to address these priorities. Additionally, she is working to increase accessibility to the aerospace workforce for international residents.

2. Lt. Governor Aruna Miller welcomed a delegation from Victoria, Australia, to Maryland. During the visit, she met with Margaret Gardner, the Governor of Victoria, to discuss strategies for fostering economic development—particularly in the life sciences sector—between the two regions. Australia remains a vital trade partner for Maryland.

3. Lt. Governor Aruna Miller visited the University of Maryland's Quantum Computing Lab (QLab) to showcase Maryland's position as a national leader and international hub for quantum computing. Governor Wes Moore recently announced the "Capital of Quantum" initiative—a groundbreaking public-private partnership poised to drive \$1 billion in investments and solidify Maryland's status as a global leader in quantum information science and technology.



Governor Wes Moore signs AI and Digital Modernization Executive Order 01.01.2024.02

4. In January 2024, the Moore-Miller Administration announced new policies via an Executive Order to streamline Artificial Intelligence. The Administration is focused on providing appropriate and necessary guardrails on the use of AI within state agencies to protect both state and national security.

5. Lt. Governor Aruna Miller worked with the Maryland Federal Delegation and Prince George’s County leaders to assist in relocating the FBI Headquarters to Greenbelt, MD. The relocation of the FBI Headquarters will add 7,000 jobs to Maryland’s economy and generate annual revenue of over \$4 billion. The FBI’s International Operations division operates with specialized agents in more than 180 countries.

6. As a member of the Maryland Economic Council, Lt. Governor Aruna Miller is working with industry leaders to analyze and recommend economic policies that foster job growth, build the state’s workforce, and create a regulatory environment that enables local, national, and international businesses to grow and thrive.

7. On September 11, Lieutenant Governor Aruna Miller gave remarks at the Quantum World Congress in Tysons, Virginia, during the “Perspectives from Maryland” plenary session. Quantum World Congress is a first-of-its-kind global quantum conference, exposition, and networking series that attracts a cross-sector, multidisciplinary audience. It showcases major trends in quantum solutions, research, education, workforce development, thought leadership, policy, business, and investment.

Quantum World Congress has welcomed participants from over 22 countries in recent years. It is a project of the Potomac Quantum Innovation Center, an initiative of Connected DMV, a nonprofit organization that brings together Greater Washington’s collective assets and brightest minds to deliver initiatives with the potential to fundamentally reshape our physical, digital, economic, and social infrastructure. The event is presented in collaboration with the Quantum Economic Development Consortium (QED-C) and the Quantum Industry Coalition (QIC).

Lieutenant Governor Aruna Miller’s presence at Quantum World Congress amplified her priority of making STEM education accessible and equitable for women and people of color. She also highlighted the IONQ Lab located in College Park, Maryland, which was recently identified as the epicenter of quantum computing.

Department of Agriculture

1. Held meetings with livestock genetics producers to determine international marketing strategies for 2024.
2. Conducted outreach to livestock genetics exporters to determine which countries to target in 2024.

3. The Department of Agriculture met with an Irish company which is a world leader in researching and developing state-of-the-art genomic tools for the Thoroughbred industry. This company provides tests that analyze the DNA of the horse to predict optimum race distance, optimum race surface, and performance potential. Discussions are ongoing into how Maryland's horse industry could incorporate this testing to increase the value of Maryland equine genetics and support the horse industry.

4. Initial discussions with the Virginia Department of Agriculture have taken place to collaborate on a project to develop the market in targeted African countries for Maryland & Virginia livestock genetics. Maryland will focus on dairy genetics, while Virginia will focus on beef cattle genetics. The plan will include efforts to secure federal grant funding through the U.S. Livestock Genetics Export Inc.

Department of Commerce



Secretary of Commerce Kevin A. Anderson at the Maryland Aerospace Day Reception

1. See above activities re: Maryland Innovation Lab, FDI marketing efforts, and Arab Health.
2. Developing a series of webinars on the life sciences to deliver to life sciences industry clusters overseas.
3. Applications for the Maryland Innovation Lab (Food Sustainability cohort) have closed and are being reviewed for selection for the bootcamp in April.
4. See above regarding the Singapore Air Show.
5. The Maryland Innovation Lab Bootcamp and Pitch Day were held over 3 days in early April, with 9 start-ups participating from 5 countries, to support innovation challenges identified by 3 Maryland corporate sponsors (Pompeian, Sodexo, and Simpli). OIIT presented to the bootcamp on Why Maryland and the Global Gateway program. Pitch Day was successful with attendance of approximately 100 participants. Winners of the Pitch Day event have been selected and will be announced in a press release in the coming weeks. OIIT is following up with the start-ups to encourage them to consider opening offices in Maryland, and to offer their solutions to other food companies in the state. The Maryland Innovation Lab plans to announce the next cohort for this program in May.

6. Department of Commerce staff attended the Shimadzu Scientific Instruments ribbon cutting for their new R&D Center. This is a foreign direct investment from Japan.

7. See Strategic Goal 4, MDE, Item #3.

8. OIIT presented to a group of Taiwanese healthcare companies as arranged by SelectUSA to promote Maryland as a place to invest.

9. In June, the Office of International Investment and Trade attended the InfoSecurity Europe trade show in London, which is Europe's leading trade show for cybersecurity. Seven Maryland companies joined the delegation as part of the Maryland booth and delegation. The mission included a tour of Plexal, Maryland's partner in the soft-landing exchange program. Department of Commerce staff met with 30+ prospective investors, in addition to supporting the Maryland companies with dozens of meetings to support their growth into the European market.

10. In August, the Department of Commerce participated in a Maryland Webinar for Kyoto Research Park, promoting Maryland to Japanese companies in the Life Sciences sector.

11. Several Department of Commerce staff members attended the Quantum World Congress in Tyson's Corner in September to promote Maryland as a top global location for this emerging industry.

12. In September, OIIT coordinated and hosted a delegation from Spain focused on the cyber sector.

13. In September, the Department of Commerce coordinated a visit from a Finnish delegation to visit relevant sites and meet appropriate individuals in Maryland.

See life sciences companies noted under Goal #3.

14. In December, the Department of Commerce met with 5 aerospace and defense companies in Southern Maryland, together with our partners from the Federal Government's U.S. Export Assistance Center, to promote export services.

15. See Strategic Goal 5, Lt. Governor, Item #4.

Department of the Environment

1. Participated in regional conversations about the new Comprehensive Evaluation of System Response (CESR) Scientific Report for the Chesapeake Bay and ways the state can remain a global leader in estuary restoration under ongoing climate change.

2. See above for more information about the Department of the Environment's participation in discussions with a supplier to advance school bus and public transit electrification in the state.

3. Deputy Secretary Dorsey presented Maryland's leadership on blue and green tech at an AI & Sustainability Summit in Washington DC; one follow-up of this engagement included connecting the Executive Director of the Sweden - U.S. Green Transition Initiative with Department of Commerce to advance Maryland's integration of AI technology with regard to data centers and energy back-up systems.

4. Senior Staff from the Department of the Environment and Department of Commerce followed up with staff from the Sweden-U.S. Green Transition Initiative to facilitate discussions with Quantum Loophole and the Public Service Commission to learn more about the existing technologies that Swedish companies must support AI and data centers with energy storage and green energy solutions.

Maryland Higher Education Commission

1. In January 2024, Higher Education Secretary Dr. Sanjay Rai attended the farewell reception for Ambassador of the Republic of India, Taranjit Singh Sandhu. The India-U.S. relationship includes defense, education, and the recently launched U.S.-India Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET) to elevate and expand strategic technology partnerships and cooperation between the governments, businesses, and academic institutions of the two countries. The event was hosted by the U.S.-India Business Council (USIC) in Washington DC.

2. In May, University of Maryland at Baltimore County visited with President Valerie Ashby and her Cabinet to discuss the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC)'s work and visit the campus. The primary topics of discussion included Maryland Competitiveness and International Student Recruitment.

UMBC's large influx of international master's students in the College of Engineering & Information Technology (COEIT). Higher Education Secretary Dr. Sanjay Rai remarked on the important work in computing programs and the need to continue attracting more international students not only at the graduate level, but also undergraduates.

3. In May, at the Maryland Independent Colleges and Universities Association (MICUA) Board Meeting, Higher Education Secretary Dr. Sanjay Rai shared the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC)'s vision for higher education and the need for Department of Commerce, Department of Labor and MHEC to work more in alignment to support academic programs.

Department of Transportation

See Strategic Goal 4, OSOS, Item #11.

Strategic Goal 4:

Lead the Nation in Combating Climate Change, Addressing Damage to the Environment, and Supporting Climate Change-Resilient Communities with a Whole-of-Government Approach.

Secretary of State

1. Deputy Secretary Michael Lore met throughout the year with Japan-based environmental professionals who are interested in establishing bilateral programming related to nature-based solutions (NBS) for environmental resiliency. During a meeting in February with counterparts in Maryland's Sister State in Japan, Kanawaga Prefecture, Director of International Affairs Nitsch discussed expanding the partnership to include the environment and nature-based solutions (NBS).
2. In April, the Department of Commerce coordinated with the OSOS, the Department of the Environment and the Institute for Marine Environmental Technology (IMET) to host a delegation from the Czech Republic led by Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Environment Tomáš Tesař to showcase some of the State's environmental assets. During the visit, IMET provided a comprehensive overview of its initiatives, highlighting its work on the restoration and safeguarding of coastal marine systems. IMET also showcased their research in sustainable aquaculture, bioremediation, urban ecosystems, and oyster and ecosystem resilience. Representatives from the OSOS and Department of Commerce also arranged a meeting and tour with the Middle Branch Resiliency Initiative for the delegation, which provided an overview and on-site exploration of the Project in Baltimore.
3. In April, Deputy Secretary Michael Lore and representatives of the Division of International Affairs met with Morris Koffa, Parliamentarian of the Maryland Sister States Program and former chair of the Maryland - Bong and Maryland Counties, Liberia Sister State Committee, to discuss the Africa Environmental Watch (AEW). AEW promotes environmental and climate change educational awareness by engaging with communities, especially in the African diaspora community.



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee presents a Governor's proclamation to Elizabeth Glenn, coordinator of the Pan African City Exposition (PACE) at Bowie State University

4. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee provided welcoming remarks on behalf of the State of Maryland at the opening ceremony of the Pan African City Expo (PACE) 2024 at Bowie State University in June. This second Expo, the first hosted in the U.S., is organized by the U.S.-Africa Collaborative with support of the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development and the OSOS. Ambassadors from Sierra Leone and Namibia, as well as representatives from the Embassy of Nigeria attended. Acting Secretary Todman of HUD gave plenary remarks. The 4-day conference brought together academics, professionals, and government officials from Africa and the U.S., as well as other countries, to discuss the latest innovations and best practices in housing, community development, and human settlements. Additionally, Secretary of Housing and Community Development Jake Day met with counterparts from South Africa and the province of KwaZulu-Natal, Maryland's Sister State in South Africa, to discuss respective priorities and challenges in the regions and agreement to exchange critical documents and meet again in the near future. Also, Maryland Port Administration (MPA) Executive Director, Jonathan Daniels, spoke on the impact that critical infrastructure, such as ports, rail and road transportation play in community development.



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and staff meet with Ambassador Sidique Abou-Bakarr Wai of Sierra Leone

5. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee hosted a Summit in June including high-level representatives of Maryland state and local governments and 32 CEOs of China-based companies interested in expanding their businesses to Maryland. Secretaries, Deputy Secretaries, or other leadership of the following state agencies provided remarks and networked with attendees at this event: Secretary of State, Higher Education Commission, Department of Commerce, Department of Agriculture, Department of Labor, and Department of the Environment. The Montgomery County Executive and his staff also participated in the Summit. The OSOS will follow up with the CEOs regarding potential partnerships and assist in connecting them with other Maryland officials. (See Goal #2, OSOS, Item #23.)

6. In July, Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, Deputy Secretary Michael Lore, Special Assistant Alexandria Liu, and Director of International Affairs Nitsch met with the Associate Director for the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs Hasset, Project Manager at the U.S. EPA Lucey, and Special Assistant to the President and Senior Advisor for States and Implementation for the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs Whalen for a briefing of the Inflation Reduction Act and related programs. Our Office will share this information with relevant stakeholders, including nonprofits and companies that are in Maryland or interested in coming to Maryland about the opportunities.

7. Deputy Secretary Michael Lore attended International Bog Day in Millersville in July and spoke with stakeholders advocating for Nature Based Solutions (NBS) in Maryland.

8. In September, the OSOS facilitated a meeting during UN Climate Week between the Premier of KwaZulu-Natal, Maryland's Sister State in South Africa, and Secretary of the Environment Serena McIlwain where they discussed climate-related matters.

9. Special Assistant Alexandria Liu attended events related to UN Climate Week in September, where she attended events related to global food policy, food systems, regenerative agriculture, and procurement and engaged in substantial networking with policy makers, practitioners, and think tank leaders. A briefing was provided to the Department of Agriculture, Department of the Environment, and other Offices as relevant.

10. Director of International Affairs Nitsch discussed with the U.S. Embassy in Stockholm the upcoming visit of Annapolis Mayor Buckley's study tour of Sweden in October, with themes including sustainable transportation, urban development, and housing.

11. In November, OSOS joined other Maryland officials in November for a virtual meeting with counterparts from the Sister State of Rio de Janeiro, including from the Governor's Office and Department of the Environment. Deputy Secretary Michael Lore, Director of International Affairs Nitsch, Senior Climate Advisor Dr. Lamb, and Dave Nemazie, Chief of Staff, and Alex Fries, both from the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES) participated. Dave Nemazie recently participated (in person) at the Green Latin America conference in Rio, part of the G20 that Rio has been hosting. There was also a discussion of expectations for participation at COP 30 in Amazonia in 2025, and how Maryland and Rio can show continued leadership in many environmental arenas. The Maryland-Rio environmental working group plans another virtual meeting in December to discuss the MOU and strategies for funding.

12. The OSOS and the Department of the Environment have worked together to draft a renewed MOU between Maryland and Rio State, Brazil, to provide a framework for collaboration on environmental matters. The MOU is due for renewal.

13. See Strategic Goal 2, OSOS, Item #23.

14. See Strategic Goal 2, OSOS, Item #40.

15. See Strategic Goal 3, OSOS, Item #1.

16. See Strategic Goal 3, OSOS, Item #11.

17. See Strategic Goal 4, MDE, Item #3.

18. See Strategic Goal 4, MDE, Item #7.

19. See Strategic Goal 6, OSOS, Item #3.

Lieutenant Governor

1. The Moore-Miller Administration is focused on combating climate change. To achieve this, the Administration announced a comprehensive plan in 2023 to reduce the state's pollution by 60% by 2031 and transition Maryland to 100% clean energy by 2035. In 2024, a record investment will be made to implement the policies outlined in the plan to address climate change.

As part of the initiative to reform state government and combat climate change, Lt. Governor Aruna Miller visited the Maryland Department of the Environment in early February. During the visit, she met with Secretary of the Department of the Environment Serena McIlwain and state employees to identify gaps in current environmental policies and discuss how the Lt. Governor's office can support the Department of the Environment in achieving a 60% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2031 and reaching net-zero emissions by 2045. Additionally, she met with climate change industry leaders to establish a public-private partnership for combating climate change.

Department of Agriculture

In June, the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) and Department of Agriculture led representatives from 22 embassies on an agricultural attaché tour. The delegation visited Ruppert Landscape, Wyndham Oaks LLC, Windridge Vineyards, One Acre Farm, and West Willard Fields to explore Maryland's agriculture and gain insights into technologies, climate-smart agriculture, and more.

Department of Commerce

1. See Strategic Goal 4, OSOS, Item #2.

Department of the Environment

1. Released Maryland's 2031 Climate Pollution Reduction Plan on December 28, 2023.
2. Senior officials met with the Governmental Relations Attache from Quebec about Maryland's Climate Pollution Reduction Plan and opportunities for regional policy coordination; one opportunity for future collaboration with Quebec and the Department of Transportation includes a Mobility Week featuring Quebec's medium and heavy-duty electric vehicle fleet.
3. Representatives from the OSOS, Department of Commerce, and Department of the Environment participated in meetings with a delegation led by the Czech Republic's Ministry of Environment. Secretary of the Environment Serena McIlwain discussed with the delegation their respective environmental priorities and shared best practices on waste reduction and recycling efforts to curb greenhouse gas pollution and support a circular economy, and the Department of Commerce showcased the State's assets.
4. Staff supported a follow-up conversation with a delegation from Quebec to discuss Maryland's potential membership in the international Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance.
5. Secretary of the Environment Serena McIlwain participated in a U.S. - China high-level event on subnational climate action, hosted by the California-China Climate Institute at the University of Berkeley, in support of the U.S. China Sunnylands Statement. The Secretary championed Maryland's climate leadership on a multi-national panel and communicated our interest in forming international partnerships which will help us grow Maryland's green economy.
6. Secretary of the Environment Serena McIlwain facilitated the first meeting of the Governor's Subcabinet on Climate and launched a new Senior Staff Working Group to support all cabinet agencies in developing their agency climate implementation plans due to the Governor in November.
7. In September, Secretary of the Environment Serena McIlwain participated, on behalf of the Moore-Miller Administration, in a high-level U.S.-China delegation trip, led by John Podesta, to advance climate negotiations between the two countries. On this trip, the Secretary met with officials from the National Development and Reform Commission and Circular Economy Industry Association about areas of potential climate cooperation. She also advanced conversations with two biogas and solar companies interested in doing business in Maryland. The OSOS provided support for the Department of the Environment's participation in the Subnational Climate Change Summit in Beijing in September.

8. In September, Secretary of the Environment Serena McIlwain participated in multiple high-level national and international exchanges during Climate Week in New York City. The Secretary participated in multiple panels and roundtable discussions featuring Maryland's climate leadership, including three roundtables on subnational climate action, involving Heads of State and representing Ministers from across the international Under2 Coalition and the Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance. Secretary of the Environment McIlwain also had one-on-one meetings with the Quebec Minister of the Environment Benoit Charette and Premier Thamsanqa Ntuli from KwaZulu Natal, South Africa. In both meetings, Secretary of the Environment McIlwain extended greetings on behalf of the Moore-Miller Administration and shared our intention to continue collaborating around climate change through MOUs or other international exchanges.

9. Senior Climate Advisor Dr. Lamb represented Secretary of the Environment Serena McIlwain at an event hosted at the Swedish Embassy discussing parallels and next steps on EU and U.S. climate policy. Maryland was the only state in the room alongside other EU representatives, offering opportunities to highlight Maryland's climate leadership including continued action at the state level despite changes at the federal level.

Maryland Higher Education Commission

N/A

Department of Transportation

1. The MPA participated in the American Association of Port Authorities Port Opportunities with Energy, Resilience, and Sustainability (POWERS) Summit in Tampa Bay, Florida in January. The Summit brought together industry leaders and professionals from around the world to explore collaborative solutions.

2. The Maryland Port Administration (MPA) is applying to the Environmental Protection Agency's \$3 billion Clean Ports Program to fund zero-emission port equipment and infrastructure, as well as climate and air quality planning at U.S. ports. An award from this program would provide critical support to the Port of Baltimore's transition to zero-emissions operations, reduce diesel pollution in port adjacent communities, and ensure meaningful community engagement in the Port's emissions reduction planning and project development process. MPA's funding request builds upon its commitment to meet the State's target to reduce GHG emissions.

3. The Maryland Port Administration (MPA) applied to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) \$3 billion Clean Ports Program to support the electrification and decarbonization of the Port of Baltimore. As part of this effort, MPA submitted a \$145 million application to fund critical electrical infrastructure needed to increase power capacity, procure 213 pieces of zero-emission equipment, and support climate and air quality planning at U.S. ports. This initiative aligns with MPA's commitment to reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, improving air quality in port-adjacent disadvantaged and underserved communities, and ensuring meaningful community engagement in emissions reduction planning. MPA was subsequently awarded \$147 million through the EPA's Clean Ports Program, enabling the deployment of zero-emission technology that will advance the Port of Baltimore's mission to become a net zero-emissions facility while benefiting the surrounding communities.



Governor Wes Moore signs Climate Executive Order 01.01.2024.19

Strategic Goal 5:

Support Educational Exchange Opportunities for Students from Foreign Countries and Students from Maryland and Expand Access for International Opportunities for Students in Underrepresented Communities.

Secretary of State



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and staff meet with Ambassador Nomaindiya Cathleen Mfeketo of South Africa for the 30 Years of Freedom Reception

1. Director of International Affairs Nitsch, Assistant Director of International Affairs Mantova, Senior Advisor Gebhardt, and Special Assistant Alexandria Liu met virtually with South Africa's Director General of the Department of Social Development (DSD, national level) and his team and Embassy staff in December 2023 to discuss entering a revised MOU for renewed cooperation between South Africa and Maryland in the field of Social Development. Specifically, the DSD is interested in adopting best practices and understanding lessons learned from Maryland programs in the areas of entrepreneurship, education, service to community, and drug abuse treatment and prevention to develop their own plan to engage the millions of unemployed and undereducated young people in South Africa. Dr. Jean Bailey, President of Sister States of Maryland, Inc. and Chair of the Maryland-KwaZulu-Natal Sister State Committee, attended the meeting and discussed social work education at Morgan State University and Howard University, programs which may serve as models to benefit South African researchers, educators and students.



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and staff meet with Deputy Chief of Mission Jing Quan

2. Director of International Affairs Nitsch and Assistant Director of International Affairs Mantova met virtually in January with Mark Xu, Chair of the Maryland-Anhui Sister State Committee to discuss ways to assist Baltimore-Xiamen Sister City Committee's study abroad initiative at Bard High School for high school students to visit Xiamen and Anhui Province in China in July.
3. Director of International Affairs Nitsch provided remarks at the Baltimore-Xiamen Sister City Committee Lunar New Year Celebration held at Bard Early College High School in Baltimore City in January. Attendees included representatives of the Baltimore Mayor's Office of Minority Affairs and Counselor Wang of the Chinese Embassy.
4. Director of International Affairs Nitsch and Assistant Director of International Affairs Mantova met virtually in January with Hauts-de-France counterparts to assist Lycée Hôtelier International de Lille and Worcester Technical High School with the student exchange program, tentatively scheduled for April.
5. Address Confidentiality Program Co-directors Tanya Pinkney and Eileen Hammack in February met a delegation hosted by the Japan Local Government Center to learn more about Maryland's unique program that protects victims of domestic violence.
6. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and her Executive and International Teams met in February with the Acting Director General of the South African Department of Social Development (DSD) who proposed offering bilateral social policy research opportunities with HBCUs like Morgan State University. This meeting came together as a result of the agreement signed between Maryland and the South African DSD.

7. International Division counterparts in Hauts-de-France confirmed at an April bi-monthly virtual meeting that the educational partnership between Glenelg Country School in Ellicott City and Sacré Coeur High School in Péronne, Hauts-de-France. The exchange will commence this year, with French students visiting in October, followed by students from Glenelg visiting Péronne in April 2025.
8. Special Assistant Alexandria Liu and Director of International Affairs Nitsch attended the U.S.-China Subnational Symposium in Ann Arbor, Michigan in April. They, along with Hui-Min Tzeng of the Department of Commerce, presented as panelists on the topic of Best Practices and gained significant insight from leading researchers, federal representatives, and other state-level officials on engaging with China.
9. Secretary of the Maryland Higher Education Commission Dr. Rai, Deputy Secretary Michael Lore, Director of International Affairs Nitsch, and Assistant Director of International Affairs Mantova attended the Maryland International Education Consortium (MIEC) program at Towson University in April in celebration of the 6th anniversary of the establishment of MIEC. Higher Education Secretary Dr. Rai made keynote remarks. Deputy Secretary Lore presented and recited the Governor's Proclamation, officially designating April 26th as Maryland International Education Day.
10. During a meeting in May (see Strategic Goal 2, Item #6), the Vice Governor of Fujian Province and delegation extended an invitation to Maryland's high school students to participate in their forum on China-U.S. Exchange Foundation in June.
11. In May, Assistant Director for International Affairs Rosanna Mantova participated in a virtual meeting with the Baltimore-Xiamen Sister City Committee to help plan a high school student trip to China in late July. We are engaging Anhui whose government has agreed to host the students for a day or two while they are in China.
12. Deputy Secretary Lore met in May with the consulate staff from El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala at the Baltimore Police Department's Southeast district to discuss ways the police and consulates can work together to fight the growing gang issues amongst the communities with national origins in Central America. The Deputy Secretary took the opportunity to promote the Address Confidentiality Program for survivors of domestic violence operated by the OSOS.
13. Deputy Secretary of State Michael Lore met in May with Professor Hakeem Tijani from Morgan State University to discuss ways to engage African Diaspora in Maryland and create educational exchange programs on the continent of Africa and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Professor Hakeem Tijani was appointed by Morgan State University as the executive director in charge of Global Partnerships for Africa.
14. Director of International Affairs Nitsch initiated discussions in June with the Nigerian Minister of Education Chukwudi Nwachukwu Igboeli during the opening day of the Pan Africa City Expo at Bowie State University. Conversation focused on fostering partnerships between local Maryland universities and Nigerian counterparts in the realm of scientific research, specifically in pharmaceuticals and life sciences.



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and staff meet with one of two high school student groups visiting Maryland from Kanagawa Prefecture, Maryland's sister state in Japan



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, Secretary of Higher Education Dr. Sanjay Rai, and staff meet with one of two high school student groups visiting Maryland from Kanagawa Prefecture, Maryland's sister state in Japan

15. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, Director of International Affairs Nitsch, Executive Assistant Bauer, Executive Research Assistant Kim, Executive Research Assistant Kim, and Intern Wang hosted in Annapolis in late July. The students, representing several schools in the Association of Kanagawa Private Schools, are spending two weeks at UMBC studying the English language and American culture. They had the opportunity to use their English language skills to ask questions of the Secretaries and share their thoughts on their study experiences in Maryland. UMBC is planning to sign a MOU with the Association in mid-August to continue their strategic partnership for UMBC's English Language Institute. The UMBC-Association connection was coordinated by Dr. Tomoko Hoogenboom, Chair of the Maryland – Kanagawa Sister State Committee.

16. Deputy Secretary Michael Lore and Assistant Director of International Affairs Mantova attended a meeting with the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives for a discussion exploring educational and cultural exchange with Ethiopia, specifically Addis Ababa National University, the oldest university in Ethiopia. On a related note, both engagements took place in July.

17. In July, Director of International Affairs Nitsch and Assistant Director of International Affairs Mantova invited Derrick Coley of the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) to meet with Mr. ZHANG Yun, Counselor, Ms. JIANG Hongmin, Second Secretary, and Ms. SHU Dangyi, Third Secretary from the Education Office of the Chinese Embassy in August in Annapolis. During the meeting, both parties exchanged insights on their respective higher education programs to attract future exchanges, foster cultural understanding and enhance learning opportunities for students.



Director of International Affairs Nitsch and students at the Towson University International Student Certificate Ceremony

18. Director of International Affairs Nitsch made remarks at the certificate ceremony (graduation) for international students at Towson University's English Language Institute in August. Approximately half of the group were students from Gyeongnam, Maryland's sister state in South Korea. The government of Gyeongnam Province and Towson University signed an MOU earlier this summer regarding this exchange. Towson University hopes to continue and expand this program. Director of International Affairs Nitsch was joined by Executive Assistant Bauer, the OSOS Intern Anna Wang, and OSOS Intern Tasnim Rushdan.

19. Director of International Affairs Nitsch was invited to lunch in August at UMBC to meet Mr. Seiichi Kudo of the Association of Kanagawa Private Schools. (Kanagawa Prefecture is Maryland's sister state in Japan.) The Association has approximately 30 students studying English at UMBC's English Language Institute for two weeks this month. Others at the lunch included Dr. Chris Steele, UMBC Vice Provost; Dr. David Di Maria, UMBC Associate Vice Provost; Adam Holden UMBC Director of Global Programs; and Dr. Tomoko Hoogenboom, Professor of Japanese language at UMBC and Chairperson of the Maryland-Kanagawa Sister State Committee.

20. Director of International Affairs Nitsch attended the MOU signing ceremony in August at UMBC between The Association of Kanagawa Private Schools and UMBC. The agreement aims to continue their strategic partnership offering short-term study opportunities to Kanagawa students. Along with the participants listed above, UMBC's new provost, Dr. Manfred H.M. van Dulmen was present to sign the agreement, along with Dr. Chris Steele, UMBC Vice Provost; Dr. David DiMaria, UMBC Associate VP for International Programs; Adam Holden, UMBC Director of Global Programs; Dr. Tomoko Hoogenboom, UMBC Professor of Japanese Language and Chairperson of the MD - Kanagawa Sister State Committee; Dr. Francis Hult, UMBC Professor of Education; Ms. Miki Sasaki, Seiko Gakuin Jr/Sr High School Teacher; and Mr. Yohei Kurodo, Seiko Gakuin Jr/Sr High School Teacher.

21. Director of International Affairs Nitsch attended the farewell dinner in August for the Association of Kanagawa Private Schools and UMBC delegation leaders and teachers hosted by UMBC at a restaurant at Maryland Live, Hanover. The invitation, from Provost for International Program David Di Maria, was an acknowledgement of the role the OSOS played in connecting the Association and UMBC.

22. Director of International Affairs Nitsch and Assistant Director of International Affairs Mantova, along with Mark Xu, Chairperson of the Maryland-Anhui Sister State Committee, met virtually in August with Peter Nesbett, Director of the Mitchell Museum at St. John's College in Annapolis, to discuss the upcoming exhibit of Chinese artistic rocks, some of which are from Anhui Province. The conversation centered on what kind of support (financial, community) the Maryland Sister States Program/the OSOS and the Anhui Committee might be able to provide. The exhibit is scheduled to open in January. Mr. Nesbett was to send a detailed one-page document about the exhibit that we can send to contacts to help drum up interest. Director of International Affairs Nitsch will connect with Administrative Director Poy of the Governor's Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs to ask if the Commission would be interested to know more.

23. Director of International Affairs Nitsch met with members of the Baltimore-Xiamen Sister City Committee for a lunch meeting in Baltimore in September, a follow up to their successful 2-week student exchange trip to China in July and August. Students, teachers, and parents from Bard High School Early College in Baltimore participated in an educational exchange opportunity with students from Xiamen for a one-week program in Xiamen at the end of July. The students then traveled to Anhui Province for a two-day program, most of which took place at Yellow Mountain (Huangshan) and Huangshan University. The delegation ended their trip in Beijing. The Baltimore-Xiamen Sister City Committee is considering sending another student delegation to the education event next summer. Director of International Affairs Nitsch will speak with Mark Xu and the Maryland-Anhui Committee to determine if they support the idea of the students visiting Anhui again in 2025 or 2026. If so, then Director of International Affairs Nitsch will reach out to her counterparts in Anhui Province to ask for their assistance for next year(s).

24. In July, Deputy Secretary Michael Lore joined a call between Yodit Negede, an African Affairs Commissioner, and a representative from Ethiopia's Addis Ababa University discussing the potential for a cultural exchange between AAU and Morgan State University to include language programs as well as other culturally significant educational exchange.

25. Special Assistant Alexandria Liu and Director of International Affairs Nitsch met virtually in July with Hauts-de-France counterparts for their periodic meeting. Secretary Woods's recent visit to France facilitated by our Office was discussed. Education topics were also discussed, including the effort to match regional schools in the sectors of sustainable construction and IT. HdF is planning a Fulbright event on September 11th, highlighting the relationship with Maryland. HdF is planning to interview a professor in Hauts-de-France who participated in the Fulbright program in Maryland, as well as professors he interacted with during his time in Maryland, in order to create a promotional video for the program. Educational exchange opportunities were also discussed, including that Baltimore City College High School, a historic International Baccalaureate (IB) school in Baltimore City, is in the process of establishing a program with a high school in Hauts de France.

26. In July, Lt. Governor Aruna Miller met with 25 Mandela Washington Young African Leadership Initiative Fellows, who were hosted by the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) for six weeks. The 25 Fellows, aged between 22 and 36, are accomplished innovators and leaders in their communities and countries. They represent a range of professional, entrepreneurial, and social activism fields and hail from 21 different African nations, from Nigeria to Kenya, and South Africa to Ghana.



Governor Wes Moore, Lt. Governor Aruna Miller, Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, and Secretary of Service and Civic Innovation Paul Monteiro meet with the Mandela Washington Young African Leaders



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee meet with Mandela Washington Young African Women Leaders

The University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) is a Leadership Institute in Civic Engagement for the Mandela Washington Fellowship. Leadership in Civic Engagement Institutes are tailored to Fellows who are civically engaged and serve the public through non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, or volunteerism. The Institutes expose Fellows to civic engagement in the United States

while building technical and leadership capacity in areas such as advocacy, strategic planning, organizational development, and the intersection of civil society with business and government.

27. In August, Director of International Affairs Nitsch collaborated with the World Trade Center Institute (WTCI) to organize a meeting for this year's cohort of WTCI University Albrecht Fellows in Annapolis. The Fellows are students of varying ages and experiences, mostly studying business and finance at local universities/colleges in the DMV area. While the Albrecht Fellowship mostly gives the Fellows opportunities to meet and network with private sector leaders, our Office coordinated their meeting with Service and Civic Innovation Secretary Monteiro, who shared the priorities and plans for the Office on Service and Civic Innovation. It was a lively and engaging conversation. Director of International Affairs Nitsch also gave a presentation about the work of the OSOS and its International Division.

28. The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) is committed to working with the Office of the Secretary of State (OSOS) to engage with countries interested in expanding foreign student enrollments. Recently, MHEC participated in a call to discuss MHEC's role in a Chinese trade mission.

29. Secretary Lee, members of her Executive and International Teams, and Higher Education Secretary Dr. Sanjay Rai met in August, with 29 students from Seiko Gakuin Jr/Sr High School, in Kanagawa Prefecture, Japan. Like the students who visited in July, this delegation also studied English language and American culture at UMBC for approximately two weeks.

30. Special Assistant Alexandria Liu and Director of International Affairs Nitsch along with Hui-Min Tzeng of Department of Commerce met with organizers of the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations (NCUSCR) in August to provide feedback to the Committee's program to fund and organize week-long subnational, bipartisan delegations from the U.S. to China. The delegation would be funded in part by U.S. philanthropic entities and be organized in partnership with China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The first trip is planned for Summer 2025. NCUSCR is credited with bringing the first U.S. governors and mayors to China in the 1980s and 1990s and conducts similar delegations with Congressional staff. The NCUSCR organized the U.S.-China Subnational Symposium in Michigan earlier this year, which was attended by Special Assistant Liu, Director of International Affairs Nitsch, and Hui-Min Tzeng.

31. The OSOS participated in several events associated with the George Washington University's Elliot School of International Affairs. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee provided keynote remarks for the Executive Course on Subnational Governance and Diplomacy on Maryland's engagement of foreign stakeholders, and received engaging questions from attendees working for think tanks and subnational economic development and community engagement offices about the Maryland Sister State Program and Maryland's climate diplomacy. The course was administered by Dr. Erwan Lagadec, Associate Research Professor at the Institute for European, Russian, and Eurasian studies at George Washington University. Executive Assistant Bauer and Assistant Director of International Affairs Mantova participated in the two-week course in September, where the State of Maryland was highlighted as a leader of subnational diplomacy and topics included best practices in subnational cooperation, the role of subnational and non-state actors in the global climate regime, women, peace and security agenda, and feminist foreign policy. Also in attendance for this course were representatives of Pennsylvania, New York, Iowa, North Carolina, California, North Carolina, Louisiana, Virginia, Oregon, Illinois, Michigan, Washington, Canada, Paris, Poland, Nevada, Spain, London, the Netherlands, Columbia, Mexico, and more. Deputy Secretary Michael Lore and Special

Assistant Alexandria Liu attended other events related to the program, where they engaged a collection of foreign policy experts and practitioners, including representatives of the U.S. Department of State and U.S. Department of Defense on matters of subnational diplomacy.

32. Deputy Secretary of State Michael Lore, Derrick Coley, Executive Director of External Affairs for the Maryland Higher Education Commission, and Director of International Affairs Nitsch met in Annapolis in December with a delegation from the Wannan Medical College based in Anhui Province, China. Executive Director Coley provided an overview of the responsibilities of the Maryland Higher Education Commission and relayed Higher Education Secretary Dr. Sanjay Rai's support of international student exchanges. Jeannette Dai-Wang, Associate Director of Global Learning Initiatives at the Office of International Affairs of the University of Maryland, shared with Director of International Affairs Nitsch and Director Coley the delegation's training agenda for the remaining two weeks of their stay in Maryland.

33. Throughout the year, the OSOS leveraged the U.S. Department of State to evaluate and execute International Affairs exchanges on behalf of our office as well as other State agencies. This included utilizing the resources of the U.S. State Department's Subnational Diplomacy Unit (established in 2022), as well as various country-specific specialists. Through these exchanges, the U.S. State Department became more familiar with the international affairs of the State of Maryland and the Office Secretary of State, namely the Maryland Sister States Program and the Subcabinet for International Affairs. Our Office also learned of unique programs such as the Lewis Local Diplomats Program inaugurated this year to offer foreign service and civil service officers the chance to work in mayoral, gubernatorial, or other local government offices, where they can contribute to advancing the office's international engagement priorities.

Lieutenant Governor



Lt. Governor Aruna Miller and Secretary of State Susan C. Lee meet with the Vice-Governor of Anhui Province

1. Met with the Anhui Province Delegation in December 2023 to highlight the state's commitment to higher education in Maryland and supporting international students.

2. Lt. Governor Aruna Miller met with international women entrepreneurs participating in the U.S. State Department's International Visitors Leadership Program (IVLP). The main goal of IVLP is to connect international entrepreneurs with state leaders to develop a long-term relationship that aligns with the U.S. Foreign Policy goals.

3. Lt. Governor Aruna Miller hosted a group of high school exchange students who have been in the U.S. for the past year. During the visit, Lt. Governor Aruna Miller identified the challenges that are currently affecting international students and came up with solutions to encourage students to be more civically engaged.

4. Strategic Goal 5, OSOS, Item #26.

Department of Agriculture

1. The Maryland Horse Industry Board continued talks with foreign Sister State partners in Hauts-de-France, France, and County Cork, Ireland, on rider exchange programs.

2. Supported a young horse rider exchange program between the Loch Moy 4 Star event in Maryland and Millstreet International in Ireland.

3. In May, Department of Agriculture hosted students from Bourbourg UFA for a tour of Maryland agriculture. Located in the region of Hauts-de-France, a Sister State to Maryland since 2020, Bourbourg UFA serves as a training school for students interested in pursuing careers in technical fields, including agriculture. Students and faculty spent the two-day tour visiting farms and agricultural operations in Western Maryland and the Eastern Shore.

4. MDA had an introductory meeting between key representatives of the Hauts-de-France and Maryland horse industries. The OSOS and MDA have shared information on Maryland's horse industry, including information on schools that provide equestrian programs, statistics on Maryland's horse industry, and some leisure/ tourism-related information. Discussions have included:

- Meeting with Oldfields and the opportunity for exchange between high school students (they are open to receiving French students and also to sending their students to HdF for their May program).
- Connecting with the Maryland Thoroughbred Career Program (1-week program to interact with various professionals in Maryland's horse industry) with the HdF equine vocational programs.
- Inviting a Hauts-de-France delegation to visit Maryland, possibly during Maryland Horse Month (October 2024). Numerous horse events are taking place in October, with some international highlights including Maryland 5 Star and Washington International Horse Show.

Department of Commerce

N/A

Department of the Environment

The agency is currently hosting a state science policy fellow and climate corps member. We look forward to working with our university and agency partners to expand access to diverse students.

Maryland Higher Education Commission



Secretary Rai participating in the UMBC International Education Week as the Keynote Speaker

1. Met with a representative from the OSOS to discuss the Maryland Higher Education Commission's (MHEC) input regarding the annual International Education Day in Maryland.
2. The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) is committed to working with the Office of the Secretary of State (OSOS) to engage with countries interested in expanding foreign student enrollments. Recently, MHEC participated in a call to discuss MHEC's role in a Chinese trade mission.
3. The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) External Relations staff met with Director of International Affairs Nitsch and Special Assistant Alexandria Liu from the OSOS to discuss encouraging more foreign students to enroll in Maryland's community colleges. MHEC provided a list of potential institutions.
5. Deputy Secretary Michael Lore joined a call between Yodit Negede, an African Affairs Commissioner, and a representative from Ethiopia's Addis Ababa University discussing the potential for a cultural exchange between AAU and Morgan State University to include language programs as well as other culturally significant educational exchange.
6. Strategic Goal 5, OSOS, Item #17.
7. Strategic Goal 5, OSOS, Item #28.
8. Strategic Goal 5, OSOS, Item #29.



Secretary Rai served as the keynote speaker at Towson University's Maryland International Education Consortium (MIEC) Day

Department of Transportation

MPA hosted the Council on Foreign Relations for a Port of Baltimore tour on July 31 for members of the Stephen Kellen Term Member Program.

Strategic Goal 6:

Promote and Support the International Efforts of Maryland's Agricultural and Seafood Sectors.

Secretary of State

1. The 2024 Embassy Night (a diplomatic reception) at the Washington International Horse Show was a resounding success, achieving the goals our Office set for this event. In partnership with the Office of Prince George's Executive Angela Alsobrooks, our Office executed a world-class reception showcasing the significance and vibrancy of our Office's International Affairs portfolio; it inevitably was an excellent forum to strengthen international relationships across the Administration, it demonstrated Maryland as a premier destination for high-level equestrian competition to global stakeholders, and encouraged show organizers to renew their contract and continue hosting this event with a twenty-five million dollar economic impact in Maryland.



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, Secretary of Commerce Kevin A. Anderson, Secretary of Higher Education Dr. Sanjay Rai, Adjutant General Birkhead, Chief Administrative Law Judge Pak, Commissioner Nguyen of the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives, and staff meet with Olympic Riders at Embassy Night

With weeks of groundwork by our Executive Team and Division of International Affairs, the Office secured the attendance of approximately 230 of the 300+ VIPs, strategically selected for their areas of expertise. Attendees of note include: senior representatives from 26 countries with noteworthy diplomats including the Ambassador of Malaysia, the Ambassador of Mongolia, the Deputy Chiefs of Mission from the Embassies of Singapore, Bosnia and Herzegovina, China, and Mexico, and the Consuls General of France and Korea, economic ministers, and military attaches; senior leaders of the State of Maryland including Lt.

Governor Aruna Miller, the Secretaries of State, Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce, Service and Civic Innovation, Maryland Higher Education Commission, General Services, Adjutant General, Director of Homeland Security, Director of Federal Affairs, Chief Performance Officer, Chief Administrative Judge, Deputy Secretary of Environment, staff and commissioners of the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives, Executive Director of the Maryland Horse Industry Board, Deputy Executive Director of the Maryland Racetrack Redevelopment Authority, Attorney General, members of the Maryland General Assembly, staff of the Office of the Senate President; stakeholders of Maryland's horse industry; and international business and community leaders.

Some of the world's top equestrian athletes and Olympians joined the reception prior to taking their place in the arena to compete for the coveted Longines FEI World Cup later in the evening, an FEI 5-Star (CCI5*) rated competition. The CCI5* category is the highest level of eventing competition under the sport's international governing body, the Federation Equestre Internationale (FEI), with seven competitions around the world currently running at this level. Maryland is home to two of these seven 5-Star competitions, with the other one taking place at Fair Hill in Cecil County, Maryland. As we look to the future, it is clear that the success of Maryland's horse industry relies heavily on the growth of international competitions such as the Washington International Horse Show.



Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, Secretary of Commerce Kevin A. Anderson, Secretary of Agriculture Kevin M. Atticks, and Secretary of Natural Resources Josh Kurtz meet with representatives of the Japanese Embassy to promote Maryland Seafood

2. Multiple state agencies, including the OSOS, Department of Commerce, Department of Natural Resources, Department of the Environment, and Department of Agriculture, engaged the Embassy of Japan throughout the year on an exciting agricultural/seafood initiative to promote the blue catfish, a non-native species of the Chesapeake Bay, as a new food product to foreign markets. In an interesting twist, it was suggested that promoting blue catfish as a menu item could also incorporate the promotion in the United States of *ike jime*, a unique Japanese technique of catching and preparing fish for market.

These special promotions began at the Maryland-Japan Reception at the Ambassador's Residence in March at which blue catfish was served. In August, Secretary of State Susan C. Lee provided remarks at a dinner with representatives of the Japanese Embassy, seafood buyers, and leadership of the Department of Natural Resources, Department of Commerce, and Department of Agriculture to highlight Maryland's premium seafood for export, including blue catfish.

Representatives of the Maryland Department of the Environment met in September with representatives from the Japanese Embassy and the Ike Jime Federation to continue discussions on the special process. The Japanese Embassy expressed interest in learning more about Maryland seafood, specifically wild-caught Chesapeake blue catfish, snakehead/Chesapeake Channa, Maryland blue crab, and oysters.

3. In May, the International Division met with Director Kwangwoo Choi and Policy Analyst Sukwon Choi of the Jeollanamdo USA Office. They discussed the Jeollanamdo International Agricultural Exhibition (IAE), an event that occurs every two years in Naju City. They will invite MDA to attend the September 2025 event.

4. See Strategic Goal 5, MDA, Item #3.

5. See Strategic Goal 2, OSOS, Item #12.



Governor Wes Moore, Lt. Governor Aruna Miller, Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and staff at the 149th Preakness Event

6. In May, Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, Special Assistant Alexandria Liu, and Executive Assistant Bauer joined Team Maryland at the 149th running of the Preakness Stakes at Pimlico Racetrack in Baltimore. The event was an excellent opportunity to network with State and local leaders about the work of the Office, including its role in facilitating exchange with Sister States in the horse industry.

7. In June, Special Assistant Alexandria Liu, MDA Director of International Marketing Stone Slade, and representatives of Maryland Horse Industry Board met with representatives of the Chinese Embassy to discuss opportunities in the Horse Industry. The Maryland Horse Industry Board provided a proposal of engagement in the horse industry to the Chinese Embassy several years ago; this document will be reviewed by our Office and Cassie Shirk from MDA as part of next steps. The Maryland-Anhui Sister State relationship includes an MOU in the horse industry.

8. Director of International Affairs Nitsch connected Ecuadorian Counselor Macas, and Norton Pereira, State Rural Services Coordinator, Foreign Labor Certification, Maryland Department of Labor, via email in August. The OSOS, with assistance from MDA, was pleased to serve as a conduit for the Embassy in obtaining details related to H2A and H2B visas and the crab picking industry in Maryland.

9. In September, Director of International Affairs Nitsch and Administrative Director Poy of the Governor's Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs attended the Vietnamese National Day Reception at the embassy. Director of International Affairs Nitsch and Administrative Director Poy engaged both the Ambassador and Madam Van in conversation about recent programs with Vietnam, the upcoming Washington International Horse Show, and Madam Van's leadership of the committee of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Spouses Circle. They also met local community leaders (Vietnam Society) and new embassy staff in the economic section, among many others.

10. In October, Deputy Secretary Michael Lore and Special Assistant Alexandria Liu met with the Dean of the Business School of Coppin State University, the Executive Director of Coppin State's Entrepreneurship Program, and the Director of Governmental Affairs for Coppin State University to learn about a regenerative/ urban-rural farming initiative underway, "Regenerative City". Maryland-based President of the Global Association of Latinos in Agriculture Gerardo Martinez, who also serves as a Regenerative Agriculture Ambassador to the UN, proposes to bring produce farmed locally to a central processing facility to be located at Coppin State University for value-added manufacturing, then supply national food services leader Compass Group USA with products to be placed in Stadiums, Hospitals, and Educational Institutions in the mid-Atlantic. This program would serve to uplift rural communities, urban communities, close the gap of farmer accessibility to value-added processing capabilities, address food security challenges, and support the viability of the local food ecosystem. MDA's Value-Added Specialist and Baltimore City's Zero Waste/ Sustainability Specialist were also in attendance and shared enthusiasm for such a program. Governor Wes Moore met with program leaders earlier this year.

11. Secretary of State Susan C. Lee submitted ideas to the Preakness Festival Committee, led by First Lady Dawn Moore, aimed at expanding international engagement for the Preakness Festival, a world-class sporting event scheduled to take place in Baltimore in May 2025. The initiative plans to showcase Maryland's horse industry, attract new audiences, and generate economic benefits for local communities.

12. Special Assistant Alexandria Liu joined Secretary of Agriculture Kevin Atticks and the MDA team at the Maryland Horse Forum held at McDonough School. The event invites feedback from Maryland's horse community on strategies to improve the various areas of the industry, from diversity initiatives to workforce development to business best practices and overcoming regulatory challenges. The findings will be published in a report to the Governor. Terry Hasseltine was in attendance as well, and mentioned that the Washington International Horse Show, held in October in Prince George's County, and which our Office is

supporting for Embassy Night, is being supported by two grants from MSA. He also mentioned that Maryland has 23 Olympians this year, and that a "Welcome Home" or appreciation event for Maryland's Olympians in the past has included strategic partnerships with the Ravens and Commanders.

Also at the above meeting, Senior Advisor Gebhardt discussed with Montgomery County Executive Elrich's economic development advisor Judy Costello the current efforts to assist a distillery's expansion of its from Howard County to Montgomery County. It is a Chinese American owned export business with a focus on making its spirits in Maryland and exporting them to China and Taiwan.

13. Special Assistant Alexandria Liu facilitated an initial meeting at the historic Meadowbrook Stable in Chevy Chase between our Office, Director of International Marketing Stone Slade of the Maryland Department of Agriculture, Ann Litz and Bob Zhang of the Maryland Horse Industry Board, and Congressional & Subnational Affairs Counselor Wang Peijun and Commerce & Agricultural Affairs Counsellor An Xiao, both of the Embassy of China, The objective of the meeting was to introduce the Chinese Embassy officials to the Maryland Horse Industry and begin discussions of potential exchange opportunities.

14. The Maryland Horse Industry Board provided a proposal of engagement in the horse industry to the Chinese Embassy several years ago. The document will be reviewed by our Office and Cassie Shirk from the Maryland Department of Agriculture as part of next steps. The Maryland-Anhui Sister State relationship includes an MOU in the horse industry.

15. Special Assistant Alexandria Liu represented the OSOS at several meetings of the Maryland Horse Industry Board this year, with the goal of collaborating with MDA and MHIB to promote the Maryland's equine industry overseas.

16. Special Assistant Alexandria Liu represented the OSOS at several meetings with counterparts in Sister State Hauts-de-France this year, with the goal of executing the Maryland-Hauts-de-France Horse Industry MOU. She included in some of these meetings the Assistant Director of the Maryland Horse Industry Board Anne Litz and other stakeholders. A horse industry-focused trade mission from Hauts-de-France to Maryland is planned for 2025, and an agriculture-focused technical high school in HdF was identified as a partner for youth exchange with Maryland.

17. The OSOS is working with the Governor's Office, Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce, and the Embassy of Japan to organize the next Maryland-Japan Reception hosted by the Embassy of Japan, scheduled for January 2025. The objective of the evening is to highlight the strong ties between the State and Japan, in sectors such as economy, the seafood industry, life sciences, and education, among others.

Lieutenant Governor



Lt. Governor Aruna Miller and Secretary of Agriculture Kevin M. Atticks

1. Agriculture is Maryland's largest commercial industry. In 2022, the state exported \$935 million worth of agricultural products to foreign markets, ranking as the 36th largest agricultural exporter in the United States. In 2024, Lt. Governor Miller continued to collaborate with Secretary Kevin Atticks of the Maryland Department of Agriculture and Secretary Josh Kurtz of the Department of Natural Resources to ensure that the Moore-Miller administration is addressing the evolving needs of both sectors.
2. See Goal 6, OSOS, Item #1.

Department of Agriculture

1. International Marketing attended the Southern U.S. Trade Association's annual meeting to determine what agricultural trade missions MDA will lead in 2024.
2. MDA held the annual Maryland's Best Expo, which aims to connect Maryland farmers, watermen, and value-added processors with wholesale buyers. At this event, there were 31 producers that were potentially interested in international markets. Initial discussions were held at the event and follow-up is in progress.
3. See Strategic Goal 6, OSOS, Item #1.
4. See Strategic Goal 6, OSOS, Item #2.
5. See Strategic Goal 6, OSOS, Item #3.

6. Took grain exporters on tours to visit grain elevators in Maryland for potential export of products. Specific products that have potential include wheat and soybeans.
7. Submitted a proposal for federal funding to support exports of blue catfish to Indonesia.
8. Held a virtual meeting with counterparts in Hauts-de-France, Maryland's Sister State in France, to promote exchange in horse riding programs.
9. See Strategic Goal 5, OSOS, Item #7.
10. Attended and participated in the U.S. Livestock Genetics Export Association annual meeting in Monterrey, Mexico. Met with livestock genetics companies and associations to determine potential trade missions for Maryland genetics producers in 2025. Focusing on dairy, equine, and small ruminants.
11. Working with several seafood producers and exporters to export large frozen oysters to Asian markets.
12. In August, MDA International Marketing led a Southern United States Trade Association (SUSTA) trade mission to China and Hong Kong. Three food companies participated in the mission to Beijing, Guangzhou, and Hong Kong. In each city, companies met with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s Agricultural Trade Office for a market briefing, participated in retail tours for a competitor and market analysis, and met one-on-one with pre-qualified buyers and importers. Sales are anticipated for all participating companies. While the market in China is currently challenging, it is still essential to U.S. agricultural companies, and the market share lost during COVID needs to be regained.
13. MDA submitted a USDA Regional Agriculture Promotion Program grant proposal for over \$300,000 to develop the Vietnamese market for Maryland food and alcoholic beverages. If received, the funding would be used for market research, in-country consultants, and outbound trade missions to Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City with one-on-one meetings with buyers.
14. In October, Deputy Secretary Steve Connelly participated in an inbound trade mission from Indonesia at the World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wisconsin. This mission was hosted by the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture. The Indonesian delegation included officials from Indonesia's government, academia, public and private sectors. The group learned about agriculture in Wisconsin, focusing on dairy farms and processing. Multiple Maryland dairy breeders were at the World Dairy Expo. Indonesia plans to increase the amount of fluid milk for children and purchase shelf-stable milk in the short term. In the long term, they will improve their dairy industry with equipment and genetics.
15. See Strategic Goal 6, OSOS, Item #12.
16. See Strategic Goal 6, OSOS, Item #13.

Department of Commerce

1. See above re: Maryland Innovation Lab which is focused on the sustainable food sector (broadly) for this first cohort; applications closed in February.
2. Preparations for China International Import Expo (CIIE) in November 2024 are underway; Department of Commerce is coordinating this show with the MDA to help promote Maryland agriculture and aquaculture.
3. See Strategic Goal 6, OSOS, Item #2.
4. See Strategic Goal 6, OSOS, Item #16.

Department of the Environment

1. In collaboration with the Department of Agriculture, the Department of the Environment released a new approach to quantifying the contribution of Maryland's agricultural soils to fighting climate change, emphasizing the national and international leadership of Maryland farmers.
2. See Strategic Goal 6, OSOS, Item #3.
3. See Strategic Goal 6, OSOS, Item #1.

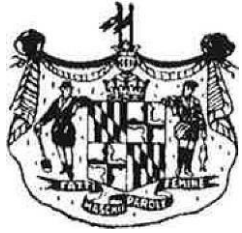
Maryland Higher Education Commission

See Strategic Goal 6, OSOS, Item #1.

Department of Transportation

1. The Maryland Port Administration (MPA) has worked closely with Ports America Chesapeake this fall for funding opportunities to construct a grain transfer facility at Seagirt Marine Terminal.
2. In February, the Maryland Transportation Authority Police hosted a Japanese delegation from Panasonic. The group observed how their products are utilized by end-users in law enforcement.

Executive Order 01.01.2024.33



EXECUTIVE ORDER

01.01.2024.33

(Rescinds Executive Order 01.01.2005.24)

Governor's Subcabinet for International Affairs

WHEREAS The State of Maryland is committed to strengthening its comprehensive and cohesive international strategy to enhance the State's competitiveness and stature in the global marketplace and international arena;

WHEREAS, Executive Order 01.01.2005.24 amended Executive Order 01.01.2001.20, which created the Governor's Subcabinet for International Affairs within the Office of the Secretary of State to coordinate open communication and collaboration among State agencies regarding international affairs for the State of Maryland;

WHEREAS, The Adjutant General of the Maryland National Guard, who serves as an international representative of the State of Maryland and maintains important relationships with international militaries, should be designated as a member of the Governor's Subcabinet for International Affairs; and

WHEREAS, Given its mission and expertise, the International Affairs Division within the Office of the Secretary of State should provide the primary staff support necessary for the completion of the Subcabinet's duties.

NOW THEREFORE, I, WES MOORE, GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND, BY VIRTUE OF THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME BY THE CONSTITUTION AND THE LAWS OF MARYLAND, HEREBY RESCIND EXECUTIVE ORDER 01.01.2005.24 AND PROCLAIM THE FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE ORDER, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY:

- A. Establishment. There is a Governor's Subcabinet for International Affairs ("Subcabinet") established for the purpose of developing, evaluating and coordinating a cohesive international strategy to

enhance the State's competitiveness and stature in the global marketplace and international arena.

B. Membership. The Subcabinet shall consist of:

- (1) The Secretary of State;
- (2) The Secretary of Commerce;
- (3) The Secretary of Agriculture;
- (4) The Secretary of Transportation;
- (5) The Secretary of Higher Education;
- (6) The Adjutant General;
- (7) The Secretary of the Environment; and
- (8) The Lieutenant Governor.

C. Chair. The Secretary of State shall chair the Subcabinet and is responsible for the oversight and direction of the work of the Subcabinet.

D. Administration.

- (1) The Subcabinet shall be staffed by the International Affairs Division within the Office of the Secretary of State.
- (2) The Governor or the Chair may establish subcommittees to carry out the work of the Subcabinet.

E. Procedures.

- (1) The Subcabinet shall meet as often as its duties require, but no less than quarterly.
- (2) The Subcabinet shall consult with other State departments and agencies as needed to carry out the provisions of this Executive Order.

F. Duties. The Subcabinet shall:

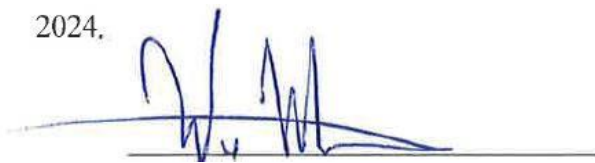
- (1) Advise the Governor on matters of international affairs.
- (2) Coordinate the State's international activity including international cultural and educational, and economic development events, trips, and activities, and cooperate with the federal government, where necessary.
- (3) Oversee the protocol functions of the State by developing and implementing a system to ensure that international protocol is adequately conducted on behalf of the State.
- (4) Contribute to the economic development of the State by ensuring that all appropriate State agencies work in a cooperative, coordinated manner to plan, implement, oversee and evaluate the foreign affairs of the State.
- (5) Examine the current structure and organization of Maryland's system of international affairs to develop:
 - a. A coordinated State international strategy that includes a procedure for identifying and assessing foreign developments that may impact the State;
 - b. An annual interagency plan for implementation of the State international strategy, including services and functions dealing with the international affairs of the State;
 - c. A consistent and clear international identity of the State by serving as the official liaison between the Governor and foreign governments and international organizations; and
 - d. Recommendations for programs and policies, if appropriate, to ensure that the needs and goals of the State's international strategy are met and accomplished.
- (6) Develop a plan to coordinate and respond to international correspondence and requests.
- (7) Perform other duties and responsibilities as assigned by the Governor.

G. Reporting. The Subcabinet shall submit a report to the Governor by January 31st each year, detailing its recommendations to support a coordinated State international strategy.

H. General Provisions.

- (1) This Executive Order shall be implemented in a manner that is consistent with all applicable statutes and regulations. Nothing in this Executive Order shall operate to contravene any State or federal law or to affect the State's receipt of federal funding.
- (2) If any provision of this Executive Order or its application to any person, entity, or circumstance is held invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, all other provisions or applications of the Executive Order shall remain in effect to the extent possible without the invalid provision or application. To achieve this purpose, the provisions of this Executive Order are severable.

GIVEN Under My Hand and the Great Seal of the State of Maryland, in the City of Annapolis, this 30th Day of September 2024.



Wes Moore
Governor



ATTEST:



Susan C. Lee
Secretary of State