



January 7, 2008

To the Russian Mayors' Delegation and the Mid-Atlantic - Russia Business Council:

On behalf of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, I would like to express our support for the visit by the Russian Mayors' Delegation to Pennsylvania being organized by the Mid-Atlantic - Russia Business Council in April 2008. I understand that the delegation will consist of more than 20 local government officials and businessmen including mayors and heads of administration representing more than ten cities and regions across Russia. We welcome you to Pennsylvania and your participation in events designed to foster political, commercial and cultural interactions between the United States and Russia.

I would like to commend the Mid-Atlantic - Russia Business Council for organizing the delegation's visit, the Council's work in organizing numerous Russian-American events and bringing Russian delegations to Pennsylvania each year. Such efforts play a vital role in increasing political and economic interactions between the Commonwealth and Russia.

Enhancing Russia-Pennsylvania bilateral trade and investment ties is a priority for us in 2008. I would like to take this opportunity to announce our department's decision to establish a Pennsylvania Authorized Trade Representative (ATR) in Moscow—the first of its kind by any U.S. state. This representative agreement is effective January 1, 2008, and we anticipate increased trade interest among Pennsylvania businesses as a result of this decision.

The Commonwealth is proud that the Russian Mayors' Delegation has chosen to visit Pennsylvania during its stay in the United States. We look forward to your visit, and we applaud the efforts of the Mid-Atlantic - Russia Business Council to make Pennsylvania and the Mid-Atlantic region the premier center for Russian-American cooperation. We also invite you to join us for the 8th and 9th Semi-Annual Russian-American Innovation Technology Week (RANIT) events to be held in Pennsylvania in June and November 2008.

Sincerely,

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