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SECRETARY MERRILL LEADS EIGHT-DAY TRADE MISSION TO CHINA WITH LEADERS FROM CT AEROSPACE, BIOTECH, AND PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRIES

SECRETARY OF THE STATE SEEKS CHINESE INVESTMENT IN CONNECTICUT
COMPANIES AND INCREASED EXPORTS OF CT PRODUCTS TO CHINA

HARTFORD: Secretary of the State Denise Merrill today announced she is currently leading an eight-day trade mission to China with executives from the Connecticut aerospace, biotech, and pharmaceutical industries. The trade mission, organized by the U.S. Commerce Department Export Assistance Center in Middletown, has the dual goal of attracting investment in Connecticut and increase the number of exports to China from Connecticut companies. The delegation of Connecticut entrepreneurs and state and federal officials is spending the majority of its time between Shanghai and Shandong province, a region with strong economic and cultural ties to Connecticut. A meeting led today by Secretary Merrill with COMAC (Commercial Aircraft Corporation of China) opened the door for Connecticut component manufacturers to become suppliers to the largest Chinese civil aerospace corporation.

“I am very pleased with today’s meeting with COMAC, because China currently has the world’s largest growth market for civil aerospace and we see real potential for a long-term business relationship with our precision manufacturers in Connecticut,” said Secretary Merrill, Connecticut’s chief business registrar. “It is critical to expand our economic ties with China, and Connecticut’s high-tech manufacturers in the aerospace, biotech and pharmaceutical industrial sectors dovetail well with China’s need for top-quality products to serve its growing middle class. Connecticut and China can be very strong trade partners. We

continue to break records exporting billions of dollars in products and services all over the world every year, and as Secretary of the State I want to send the message to Chinese entrepreneurs and potential investors that you can work Connecticut state government and the federal government to establish a presence here. Connecticut is a sound investment for Chinese capital, and Chinese companies can benefit from some of the most technologically advanced products in the world manufactured in our state.”

Secretary Merrill views this trade mission as building on the momentum created by the visit of Governor Dannel P. Malloy’s to China in 2012. Recent exporting statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau show that in 2011, Connecticut exported nearly \$1,000,000,000 in products and services to China, making China the fifth largest global export market for the state.

Secretary Merrill continued, “I want to thank both Governor Malloy, the U.S. Commerce Department’s Export Assistance Center in Middletown, and Congressman Joe Courtney (CT-2) for paving the way for Connecticut to expand and strengthen our trade partnership with the expanding Chinese market. This will mean more profits for Connecticut companies and more jobs created at home.”

Secretary Merrill’s trade mission will consist of business meetings and seminars with Chinese entrepreneurs and government officials. Accompanying Secretary Merrill on the trade mission several Connecticut entrepreneurs as well as state and federal officials including: Officials with the U.S. Department of Commerce Connecticut District Export Assistance Center, Ronald F. Angelo, Deputy Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, Rick Wheeler, CEO of Capewell Life Support and Arial Systems in South Windsor, representatives from NERAC, a Tolland company that provides research and market analysis services to bio/pharmaceutical industries and Michael Polo, a representative with Manchester-based aircraft engine manufacturer Adchem, Inc. David Schaffer, a partner at Wiggin and Dana, is participating in the mission to explore investment and collaboration opportunities on behalf of firm clients and to promote the launch of Wiggin and Dana’s new China Practice. John Schuyler, a Hartford based Certified Public Accountant, is also participating in the trade mission. Schuyler specializes in international accounting and auditing work with multinational corporations that have established a presence in Connecticut, and Schuyler chairs the Connecticut District Export Council, a group made of business professionals in Connecticut who work with the U.S. Department of Commerce to increase overseas exports from Connecticut.

In addition to the meeting with COMAC, China’s major civil aerospace company, the delegation is also meeting with Chinese subsidiaries of Pratt & Whitney, General Electric, Airbus, Boeing and other top-tier suppliers to the aerospace industry. The mission is organized by the U.S. Department of Commerce Export Assistance Center in Middletown sponsored by the CT District Export Council through fees raised by private companies for export-related training and educational events organized by the federal Commerce Department. The trade mission began on May 20th and will conclude on May 27th.