



**BIZCHINA** > Center

## Massachusetts plans for Chinese partnership

When the pilgrims "landed on Plymouth rock" in 1620, they found a new place to call home, raise their families and prosper. Over the past few decades many Chinese have landed quite close to the same site, in the area of Boston, Massachusetts, mainly drawn by the 122 colleges and universities in the state including world leaders Harvard and MIT.

Now the Bay State hopes that new initiatives to form business relationships between China and Massachusetts will result in generations of partnership on technology, bioscience, engineering and educational fronts.

On June 23, Massachusetts' Governor Deval Patrick addressed a room full of local leaders and business people who welcomed the visiting Chinese delegation of CIPA (China Investment Promotion Agency) to the Boston campus of UMass, its state-run college. After his speech, Patrick signed a memorandum of understanding along with the leaders of CIPA and other state officials, beginning a day-long symposium sponsored by Massachusetts Technology Collaborative and other agencies entitled Innovation & Collaboration - Education, Renewable Energy, Tourism and International Investment.

"I believe that a strong partnership between Massachusetts and China is in our mutual interest. Yours is an ancient culture and a powerful modern economy. Through our universities, our hospitals, our businesses and cultural institutions, Massachusetts has long enjoyed a healthy relationship with your country and your people," Patrick said, addressing the Chinese delegation in his speech.

CIPA is currently touring US cities on the heels of last week's Fourth Strategic Economic Dialogue. Back in late March, CIPA visited St. Louis as Missouri Governor Matt Blunt signed a similar memorandum of understanding with the Chinese agency. For Massachusetts, the timeliness of its action is certain while the strategy stands out among US states.

"We are a state with a relatively flat population. We are not seeing significant population growth. For talent from around the world that is educated here in Massachusetts, we would like to keep some of that talent at least for a portion of their careers. We've worked very closely with Senator (Edward) Kennedy and his staff to work to expand the H1-B Visa program so that we can retain more of that talent," explained Secretary Daniel O'Connell, Patrick's chief housing and economic development advisor.

From the Chinese side the opportunities presented were clear. Addressing the audience on Monday were Peng Keyu, the Chinese Consulate General in New York, as well as Deputy Director of CIPA Yu Hua, who spoke about his agency and China's Ministry of Commerce's goals.

"The (agency's) main function is a two-way investment promotion, but our focus now is to encourage Chinese companies who are going global to invest in the US's success. Trade and financial relations between the US and China are very important but trade and two-way investment are not balanced. As a Chinese government agency we hope to solve this problem, so we encourage Chinese companies to import US products as well as invest more and more in the United States," Yu said.

Massachusetts is prepared to help potential foreign investors in getting legal advice or finding real estate as the hostess for international business looking toward Massachusetts is Christa Bleyleben, executive director of the Massachusetts Office of International Trade & Investment.

In April, Bleyleben visited Shanghai Zhangjiang Hi-Tech Park, location of the Massachusetts Technology Center, to attend the ribbon-cutting commencement with Chinese government officials. During that trip her committee invited CIPA to visit Boston in the coming months. Bleyleben said the signing of the agreement would lay the foundation for a much closer, more active collaboration between CIPA and Mass.

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**Through our universities, our hospitals, our businesses and cultural institutions, Massachusetts has long enjoyed a healthy relationship with your country and your people.**

DEVAL PATRICK  
Governor of Massachusetts

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