
By: **Chairman, Economic Matters Committee (By Request - Departmental - Secretary of State)**

Introduced and read first time: January 21, 2004

Assigned to: Economic Matters

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Secretary of State - Responsibility for the Maryland Sister-State**
3 **Relationship Program**

4 FOR the purpose of transferring the responsibility for the Maryland sister-state
5 relationship program from the Department of Business and Economic
6 Development to the Office of the Secretary of State.

7 BY adding to
8 Article - State Government
9 Section 7-109
10 Annotated Code of Maryland
11 (1999 Replacement Volume and 2003 Supplement)

12 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
13 Article 83A - Department of Business and Economic Development
14 Section 3-301
15 Annotated Code of Maryland
16 (2003 Replacement Volume)

17 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
18 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

19 **Article - State Government**

20 7-109.

21 THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE SHALL ASSUME LEAD
22 RESPONSIBILITY WITH RESPECT TO THE MAINTENANCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF
23 SISTER-STATE RELATIONSHIPS.

1 **Article 83A - Department of Business and Economic Development**

2 3-301.

3 (a) There is an Office of International Trade within the Department to
4 promote the development of international business activities and opportunities for
5 the citizens of this State.

6 (b) In furtherance of the purpose set forth in subsection (a) of this section, the
7 Office shall:

8 (1) Encourage Maryland businesses to increase international trade
9 activities, with special emphasis on exports, by:

10 (i) Providing informational and consultative services on the
11 international trade process including, but not limited to, market research and
12 selection, marketing techniques and risks, foreign trade laws and regulations, and the
13 availability of private or public financing;

14 (ii) Developing publications to facilitate the exchange of product
15 and services information between Maryland businesses and foreign businesses;

16 (iii) In cooperation with local government and the private sector,
17 initiating and organizing trade missions to and from foreign countries and
18 participation in trade fairs;

19 (iv) Establishing an outreach program to small and medium sized
20 businesses with export potential that provides counseling and that utilizes
21 experienced private sector exporters and other qualified individuals;

22 (v) Assisting, where appropriate, in obtaining export related
23 financing through the Maryland Industrial Development Financing Authority and
24 other federal, local, or private programs; and

25 (vi) Channeling trade leads and providing a list of prescreened
26 foreign intermediaries;

27 (2) Encourage and facilitate the participation by Maryland businesses in
28 barter and counter trade transactions and joint venture transactions, where
29 appropriate, by:

30 (i) Providing informational and consultative services on, but not
31 limited to, the necessary components, laws, and regulations involved in these
32 transactions;

33 (ii) Facilitating the commercial relationship between the Maryland
34 business and counterpart foreign business involved in these transactions; and

35 (iii) Providing, in cooperation with the private sector, a listing of
36 potential barter and joint venture opportunities;

1 (3) Coordinate its programs with the Departments of Agriculture,
2 Environment, and Transportation, the University System of Maryland, and other
3 appropriate federal, State, local, and private agencies and organizations;

4 [(4) Assume lead agency status with respect to the maintenance and
5 development of sister-state relationships;]

6 [(5)] (4) Encourage and facilitate regional efforts to develop local and
7 regional international trade programs and expertise, consistent with State efforts,
8 through technical assistance and use of matching grants to public or private regional
9 entities;

10 [(6)] (5) Participate, where appropriate, and in conjunction with other
11 units of the Department, the Department of Transportation, and any other State
12 agencies or departments, in Maryland overseas offices to provide informational and
13 marketing services to support international trade efforts of the Office;

14 [(7)] (6) Encourage the location of new international industrial or
15 commercial enterprises in the State, in coordination with local governments and other
16 entities; and

17 [(8)] (7) Engage in any other activity reasonably necessary to achieve
18 the purposes of this section.

19 (c) The Office has authority to contract or make grants consistent with the
20 purposes of this section. All contracts and grants shall be subject to the approval of
21 the Secretary or the Secretary's designee. Procurements for services or supplies to be
22 performed or delivered outside the State shall be consistent with, but not subject to,
23 the purposes or requirements of the State Finance and Procurement Article.

24 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take
25 effect October 1, 2004.