

SISTER STATE AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS, U.S.A.
AND
THE AZORES AUTONOMOUS REGION, PORTUGUESE REPUBLIC

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Azores Autonomous Region have a long-standing relationship based upon commerce and maritime interests;

WHEREAS, the first Azorean immigrants to Massachusetts can be traced back to the early 18th century, when they played a significant role in the success of the economically crucial whaling industry;

WHEREAS, over the subsequent three centuries significant numbers of Azorean immigrants moved into Massachusetts and through their hard work and enterprise established considerable industrial and agricultural operations, including construction, manufacturing, dairy and produce farming and;

WHEREAS, Massachusetts has historically been a popular destination for migrant labor from the Azores, enhancing strong cultural ties between the two regions; and serving as the basis for more than 500,000 fellow Portuguese and their descendants to live in Massachusetts, the majority of whom have either come directly from the Azores or have Azorean parentage; and

WHEREAS, the vibrant Azorean communities of Massachusetts, in the South East region and throughout the state, maintain strong academic, cultural and familial ties to their ancestral homeland;

WHEREAS, Massachusetts and the Azores have many characteristics and interests in common including: coastal and maritime resource utilization, agriculture, tourism, and fisheries; and

WHEREAS, there is potential mutual benefit for Massachusetts and the Azores from increased cooperation in targeted areas of common challenge by both parties utilizing their respective resources in geographic location, natural environment, education, expertise, commercial enterprise and institutional support.

NOW, THEREFORE, it is resolved that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Azores Autonomous Region, recognizing that their interests, activities, and objectives are complementary, hereby agree as follows:

ARTICLE ONE: STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND GOALS

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Azores Autonomous Region (hereinafter "the Parties") shall encourage cooperation and mutual understanding between Massachusetts and the Azores, and will encourage the growth of trade and investment relations within the framework of global free trade. The governments of both sides will encourage cooperation between commercial enterprises, port authorities, business associations, and other economic development and non-governmental organizations as well as the establishment of close ties between educational institutions, medical institutions, and cultural activities.

ARTICLE TWO: INFORMATION EXCHANGE

The Parties will endeavor to facilitate cooperation by Massachusetts and Azorean companies and institutions in the following areas:

- exchanges of information regarding teaching programs and continued exchange of teaching resources;
- promotion of student exchanges;
- support for new and existing cooperation between universities and other educational institutions.

ARTICLE THREE: ECONOMIC COOPERATION

The Parties will endeavor to assist in the establishment of friendly and cooperative relations and programs to foster opportunities for the creation of joint ventures or direct investment for Massachusetts and the Azores in the following areas:

- economic development;
- oceanographic & marine sciences, fisheries and port development;
- environmental technology, including renewable energy and energy conservation, recycling, toxic material remediation, and reduction of toxic emissions;
- climate monitoring, data collection and modeling;
- tourism promotion, including cooperation with regard to the development of hotel and convention facilities, airports, and strategic planning; -- high technology;
- healthcare, including biotechnology and biomedical equipment;
- education;
- other areas, as the Parties may agree.

The Parties propose to encourage cooperation on all levels which contribute to economic development in the Azores and Massachusetts. Such methods may include, without being limited to:

- joint meetings of representatives in Massachusetts and the Azores to identify and implement mutually beneficial projects and new areas of cooperation;
- visits from trade and economic delegations between Massachusetts and the Azores under mutually beneficial conditions;
- the organization of meetings, symposia and seminars to bring together public and private leaders in the respective fields outlined within the framework.

ARTICLE FOUR: EXECUTION OF AGREEMENT

Upon the execution of this Sister State Agreement, the Parties agree to designate senior government officials who will be responsible for establishing mechanisms and organizing meetings as appropriate, and will identify specific projects or programs on which to focus for the efficient implementation of the Sister State Agreement. This effort will be coordinated in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts by the Massachusetts Office of International Trade and Investment and in the Azores Autonomous Region by the Department of Commerce.

The Parties agree to meet periodically to review their progress and redefine their priorities.

ARTICLE FIVE: AMENDMENT

This Sister State Agreement, with the consent of the Parties, may be amended at any time by exchange of letters.

This Agreement is executed in two originals for each language, Portuguese and English, on the ___th day of August, 2008.

Governor Deval L. Patrick
Commonwealth of Massachusetts, U.S.A.

President Carlos César
Azores Autonomous Region, Portuguese Republic