



PEDRO E. SEGARRA
MAYOR

MAYOR WORKING TO CREATE JOBS & INCREASE HARTFORD-CARIBBEAN TRADE

NEWS AND COMMUNITY RELEASE

(August 16, 2011)--- Hartford's West Indian-American Week was more than a cultural celebration it included a lengthy discussion focused on increasing trade between Connecticut's Capital City and the Caribbean. Hartford is home to the nation's third largest West Indian community.

Mayor Pedro E. Segarra met with [Ambassador Dr. Neil Parsan](#) from Trinidad and Tobago, [Anne Evans](#), District Director of the US Department of Commerce International Trade Administration and Andrew Lawrence from the Caribbean Trade Council (CTC) on a Sunday afternoon to discuss the following:

- Bradley Airport and the necessary steps needed to make this facility a future hub for Air Jamaica. The Mayor agreed to lead the effort, while working with appropriate partners, to develop a business case/economic impact study for why Air Jamaica should consider making Hartford a home of future operations.
- Establishment of a CARICOM office in Hartford.
 - The **Caribbean Community (CARICOM)** is an organization of 15 Caribbean nations to promote economic integration and cooperation among its members, to ensure that the benefits of integration are equitably shared, and to coordinate foreign policy.
- The Mayor has agreed to serve as the lead point-person in moving forward with plans for a trade mission (likely in June of 2012) to the Caribbean. Congressman Larson and Senator Blumenthal will also be involved in this effort, as will the CTC.
- The building of a Caribbean products distribution center in Hartford was also discussed.

"When rare opportunities, like meeting with an Ambassador and a representative of the federal government, avail themselves, it is critical to take advantage of them and capitalize on outcomes -- even if it requires meeting on a Sunday. The residents of the City of Hartford have waited far too long for systematic change in government and tangible progress on job creation and economic development. Its meetings and discussions like those that occurred this weekend that will help Connecticut's Capital City move forward in ways that are consistent with the needs and demands of the many diverse communities and neighborhoods of Hartford," said Mayor Segarra.

"It is indeed welcoming to sit with a Mayor on a Sunday afternoon who is clearly passionate about Hartford, the people of Hartford, and welcomes the people of the Caribbean. This sort of support to me as an Ambassador is a breath of fresh air and it brings me great hope for the development of sustainable, cordial relationships between cities and countries everywhere," said Ambassador Parsan.

Ms. Evans added, "This meeting gave us an opportunity to move forward for the city of Hartford and our region a business and trade agenda with CARICOM. I am grateful to the Mayor for his leadership in this endeavor. We should see measurable results in 2012."

"The willingness of all these parties willing to meet on a rainy Sunday demonstrates the commitment we have to enhance trade, tourism and economic cooperation between Hartford and the Caribbean Islands. We at the CTC will continue to develop and strengthen diplomatic relationships and facilitate economic development efforts between the Caribbean islands and the City of Hartford, as well as the State of Connecticut. As proud members of the District Export Council, an affiliate of the US Department of Commerce, we will continue to encourage reciprocal investment and trade while we carry out our commitment to President Obama's National Export Initiative which is to promote and encourage the doubling exports from the United States over the next five years," said Andrew Lawrence.

This is the second such meeting that has taken place between the Mayor and Ambassador in the last several months. The previous meeting, in April, also included City Councilman and Majority Leader Ken Kennedy, representatives from Bradley Airport, the Connecticut Department of Transportation, the MetroHartford Alliance and District Export Council.