

Final Report

Minister Gary Mar's Mission to Breckenridge Colorado for the meeting of the Council of State Governments – West

August 10 – 13, 2006



Overview:

The Honourable Gary Mar, Alberta's Minister of International and Intergovernmental Relations represented Alberta at the annual meeting of the Council of State Governments (CSG)-West in Breckenridge, Colorado. Calgary-West MLA Ron Liepert, Alberta's representative on the CSG-West Trade and Transportation Committee, joined Minister Mar at the meeting.

The Minister participated in the meeting in order to strengthen ties between Alberta and the United States, build upon the Alberta Office in Washington, D.C.'s work to enhance Alberta-U.S. relations, and raise awareness concerning Alberta's growing role as a secure and reliable energy supplier.

The CSG-West provides a platform for regional cooperation among the 13 western U.S. states. Alberta is an associate member, along with British Columbia. The annual meeting focused on a variety of topics, including energy, the environment, transportation and trade.

Minister Mar's wife and daughter also accompanied the Minister. The Minister paid for their associated costs personally.

Mission Objectives:

1. Deliver an address on the status of Alberta's economy to the CSG-West Executive Committee;
2. Visit and establish contact with national centers of excellence located in the Western U.S. region;
3. Alberta's Representative in Washington, D.C. to deliver an address on North American energy security in an energy panel session;
4. Foster relationships with Canadian Consulates serving the western U.S. region;
5. Initiate and develop business relationships with governments, research facilities, organizations, and companies in the western U.S. region; and
6. Develop working relationships with U.S. legislators.

Results:

On August 11 and 12, Minister Mar attended the annual CSG-West meeting. The meeting's agenda included such topics as a forum on the urban-rural divide, transportation and trade, water and environment, and disaster and crisis management. Murray Smith, Alberta's representative in Washington, also attended and took part in a panel session on Canadian Energy and U.S. Energy Security that raised awareness of Alberta's oil sands and their role in securing North American energy security.

Minister Mar spoke to the 40-member CSG-West Executive Committee. His remarks focused on the interdependence of all economies in the western region, promoted investment in energy projects, and increased awareness of other economic sectors in

Alberta, including agriculture and technology. Elected state legislators from Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming and the Commonwealth of Guam were among those who participated.

Outside the official meeting agenda, Minister Mar met with the Director and other officials from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Golden, Colorado. The Minister laid the initial foundations for a possible relationship between Alberta and the facility to work together to research and develop renewable energy and energy efficiency.

The Minister also met with senior officials from Canadian Consulates (Denver, San Francisco and Seattle) serving the western U.S. They explored the initiation and development of business relationships with governments, research facilities, organizations, and companies in the region. Business planning sessions will be carried out with the various Consulates in the fall of 2006 and spring of 2007.

Delegation:

- The Honourable Gary Mar, Minister of Alberta International and Intergovernmental Relations
- Ron Liepert, MLA Calgary-West