

Governor to Travel to Chile to Strengthen Economic Ties

Governor will meet with business, education, and government leaders in Santiago, Valparaiso, and Rancagua

Wilmington, DE – Having made it a top priority to ensure Delaware fully benefits from the global economy, Governor Markell will visit with business and government leaders in Chile beginning later this week to build upon the state's relationship with one of its most important trading partners. Chilean fruit is a major source of business for the Port of Wilmington.

The trip includes a meeting with Chile's President, Michelle Bachelet.

Earlier this year, Diamond State Port Corporation reached an agreement for Chilean shipping company Global Reefers to continue to use the Port of Wilmington as its mid-Atlantic hub for Chilean fruit imports for the next 5 years. The Port now handles over 18 million boxes of Chilean fruit annually and reports that this trade supports more than 900 jobs as well as \$50 million in personal income, \$54 million in business revenue, and \$5 million in tax revenue for the state and the region.

"In today's world, where the vast majority of wealth is being created outside the U.S., engaging with the global economy is vital to building on our record of having the best job growth in the region," said Markell. "Chile has been one of our most valued trading partners and our partnership with Chilean business has produced significant economic benefits for both sides – benefits that have grown substantially in recent years. It should be a priority for our state to strengthen and grow this relationship to support Delaware jobs for years to

come.”

Throughout his trip, the Governor will meet with fruit exporters and shippers, including the President and board members of Global Reefers, as well as Chilean attorneys. He will also visit Universidad Bernardo O’Higgins, which has been involved with the Delaware Department of Agriculture and University of Delaware in planning agricultural and engineering programs at UD to strengthen Delaware’s workforce.

In addition to Chile’s President, government representatives on the itinerary include Chilean legislators, executive branch members, as well as the Mayor of Rancagua and other local officials.

Representatives from Delaware and the region participating in the trip will include:

- Secretary Ed Kee, Delaware Department of Agriculture
- First Lady Carla Markell (her trip is not paid for by the state)
- Gene Bailey – Executive Director, Port of Wilmington
- Benjamin Leavenworth – Honorary Consul of Chile in Philadelphia

The trip is estimated to cost less than \$30,000 and will be the first foreign trade trip in which the Governor has participated since he visited Germany a little over a year ago. Meetings and other events will begin after Markell arrives in Santiago on Friday, September 30, and will continue through the following Wednesday, October 5.