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# Amb. Patten Calls for Trade Mission from Minnesota to Liberia

*Embassy of the Republic of Liberia in the United States* ,

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by Gabriel I.H. Williams

**St. Paul, Minnesota:** The Ambassador of the Republic of Liberia to the United States, H.E. George S.W. Patten, Sr., has called on the State of Minnesota to undertake a trade mission to Liberia with a focus on health, education, tourism, agriculture, and job creation.

According to a dispatch from the Liberian Embassy in Washington, Ambassador Patten was speaking on April 25, 2019, during a meeting with the Governor of Minnesota, Hon. Tim Walz, at the Minnesota State Capitol in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Ambassador Patten is in Minnesota on his first visit to engage with the Liberian community and to further enhance the relationship between the Republic of Liberia and the State of Minnesota. Ambassador Patten lauded the State of Minnesota and Governor Walz for the strong support to the Liberian community, especially in the effort to finding a solution to the immigration challenges faced by many Liberians on Deferred Enforcement Departure (DED).

Ambassador Patten applauded the Governor for supporting the Liberian community in Minnesota, and he assured that the Liberian Government would do everything possible to ensure success of the trade mission.

The Liberian envoy noted that the government of President George Manneh Weah is focused on efforts to bring about infrastructural and economic development. Accordingly, he said, the government is focused on road construction, agricultural development, health and education, in order to improve the conditions of the Liberian people.

Ambassador Patten indicated that the Liberian Honorary Consulate in Minnesota and the Embassy in Washington, D.C. will work closely with the Governor's office to ensure that the trade delegation goes to Liberia as soon as possible.

Ambassador Patten also expressed the need to further strengthen and expand sister-city relationships between



[1]  
Ambassador G.S.W. Parren (left) standing with the Governor of Minnesota, Hon. Tim Walz

cities in Liberia and Minnesota.

For his part, Governor Walz said that there are many areas in which the Republic of Liberia and the State of Minnesota can partner, which would be mutually beneficial to both sides.

Governor Walz described the Liberian community in Minnesota, which is estimated to be about 40,000, as a critical part of Minnesota economically and professionally, and he assured that his administration would do all that is necessary to develop close partnership with Liberia.

“Minnesota is a much better place because of the vibrant Liberian community,” said Governor Walz. “This is why we look forward to a strong partnership with Liberia in trade and other areas that would be mutually beneficial.

”As an example of the growing importance of the Liberian community in Minnesota, Mr. Mike Elliott, a Liberian-born, was elected Mayor of the City of Brooklyn Center on November 7, 2018, while another Liberian-born, Wynfred Russell was also elected as Councilman for the City of Brooklyn Park.

Governor Walz recalled that the United States and Liberia have a unique relationship, dating from the founding of Liberia.

The Governor welcomed the establishment of an Honorary Consulate of Liberia in Minnesota, which is a sign of the importance of the growing relationship between his state and Liberia. He also lauded the Honorary Consul of Liberia, Hon. Jackson K. George, Jr., for working assiduously to elevate the cause of Liberia in Minnesota.

Those who accompanied Ambassador Patten at the meeting with Governor Walz included, Honorary Consul Jackson George, Liberia’s Consul General in New York, Hon. Rudolph Sherman; and the President of the Liberian Business Association (LIBA), Mr. James M. Strother, who traveled from Liberia as guest of the Liberian Business Association in the Diaspora.

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