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STATE OF MONTANA

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Governor Bullock Announces Trade Mission to China**

HELENA, MT – Montana Governor Steve Bullock today announced that he will be leading an eight-day trade mission to China in the fall.

The mission will bring together leaders in business, education, and government to focus on creating export opportunities for Montana businesses as well as deepening the long-term relationship between Montana's and China's economies. The mission will take place September 21 – 29 and include stops in Beijing, Shanghai, and Montana's sister-state, Guangxi.

"This trade mission will build ties between Montana businesses and Chinese companies and investors, and expand opportunities for education and cultural exchanges," said Bullock. "There is enormous potential to make an immediate and substantial impact to Montana's economy by expanding our trade with China."

U.S. Ambassador to China Max Baucus was pleased to hear of the Governor's trip. Ambassador Baucus formerly represented Montana as a U.S. Senator and since beginning his ambassadorial assignment, Baucus has been focused on sustaining and growing the U.S.-China economic relationship.

"I was excited to learn that Governor Bullock will be leading a trade delegation to China," said Baucus. "Expanding trade to China is a huge priority for me and my team at the U.S. Embassy, and we look forward to supporting the delegation as they help Montana businesses expand their opportunities in China," Baucus continued.

China is the world's second largest trading nation behind the United States. China is one of Montana's fastest growing markets for exports and is currently Montana's third largest trading partner. Montana exports to China have increased almost tenfold in the last decade with \$101 million of commodity goods sold to China in 2013.

With more than 95 percent of the world's population and 80 percent of the world's purchasing power outside the United States, future economic growth and jobs in Montana increasingly depend on expanding international trade and investment opportunities.

“We are committed to helping Montana businesses pursue commercial opportunities abroad, and we are proactively working to increase our overall competitiveness in the global marketplace,” said Meg O’Leary, Director of the Montana Department of Commerce. “This mission will accelerate the growth of Montana’s exports to China, which will in turn grow business and job opportunities in our state.”

The mission is being organized by the State of Montana in collaboration with the U.S. Commercial Service and U.S. Department of State. Participating businesses will have the opportunity to take advantage of trade facilitation services provided by the U.S. Commercial Service, which are designed to connect businesses with top-level Chinese corporate and government leaders in one-on-one business meetings. A full list of participating businesses will be announced mid-summer.

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