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<https://northernkentuckyusa.com/gov-bevin-kentucky-delegation-heading-to-japan-on-economic-development-and-trade-miss>

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FRANKFORT, Ky. – Gov. Matt Bevin will lead an economic development and trade mission to Japan over the coming days, joined by other state and local officials, to meet with executives, strengthen ties and encourage international investment and job creation in Kentucky.

Gov. Bevin, Sec. Terry Gill of the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development and other members of the delegation will promote Kentucky in meetings with leaders of Japanese manufacturing and technology corporations. Companies include those with facilities already in the state, as well as new prospects.

“Our economic development and trade mission to Japan will focus on meeting in person with executives from some of the world’s leading engineering, manufacturing and technology corporations,” said Gov. Bevin. “We will deliver our compelling message—that no place in America offers a better location for business investment, job creation and future growth than Kentucky. We want to ensure that global firms look to the Commonwealth first when planning a new or expansion project in the U.S. Establishing and strengthening our personal relationships with these business leaders is a major step toward that goal.”

In addition to corporate executives, members of the Kentucky delegation will meet with the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), U.S. Embassy staff and other local officials. Gov. Bevin departs Saturday and will return Tuesday, March 7. Sec. Gill and other delegation members will return later in the week.

Partners on the mission include the World Trade Center Kentucky, the Japan/America Society of Kentucky, KentuckyUnited and the U.S. Commercial Service.

“Kentucky’s relationship with Japan is one of paramount importance, both economically and culturally. Beginning more than 40 years ago, Japanese-owned companies helped lead the transformation of Kentucky into an internationally recognized player in engineering, manufacturing, service and technology arenas. Some of our largest private-sector employers and most well-known brands are Japanese-owned,” Sec. Gill said. “We look forward to broadening and deepening our relationships with key leaders in Japan during the trip, as well as opening new opportunities to increase trade.”

Japanese-owned companies operate more than 180 facilities in Kentucky, making Japan the state’s No. 1 international investor. Those facilities directly employ more than 44,400 people full-time. More than 130 of those facilities are in the state’s automotive industry.

Since January 2016, Japanese-owned companies have announced 28 expansion or new-location projects in Kentucky. Those represent nearly \$380 million in planned investments and more than 1,500 new full-time jobs.

In trade, Japan was Kentucky’s No. 7 export destination by dollar amount in 2016. Japanese companies and individuals purchased \$1.067 billion in Kentucky goods and services. Top products sent to Japan last year include aerospace products and parts, leather products – mainly for automotive seating – motor vehicle parts, purebred horses and bourbon.

Kentucky imported \$5.1 billion in goods and services from Japan in 2016, making it Kentucky’s No. 3 import partner, after China and Mexico. Among states in 2016, Kentucky was the fifth largest importer of Japanese commodities by dollar amount, behind California, Illinois, Tennessee and Washington.

Top goods and services imported from Japan last year include; motor vehicle parts; aerospace products and parts; pharmaceuticals and medicines; navigational, measuring, electromedical and control instruments; and metalworking machinery.

To ensure an ongoing relationship with Japanese companies, Kentucky operates an international office in Tokyo. This trip follows up on business opportunities presented through the office’s work and relationships built with companies in the region.



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Information on Kentucky's economic development efforts and programs is available at ThinkKentucky.com. Fans of the Cabinet for Economic Development can also join the discussion on Facebook or follow on Twitter. Watch the Cabinet's "This is My Kentucky" video on YouTube.



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