

Thank you for attending today's press conference. A special thank you to the following representatives who attended today:

John Frick and Corrine Bencie , *Senator Pat Toomey's Office*

Tim Rigby, *Congressman Keith Rothfus' Office*

John Lushko and Jackie Moran, *Representative Frank Burns' Office*

Bob Layo, *Greater Johnstown/Cambria County Chamber of Commerce*

This press conference was called to provide an update on where we stand with the area's Foreign Trade Zone. I will cover three areas today:

1. The recent visit of an official party to Argentina to discuss wine exportation opportunities.
2. The recent meetings in Washington DC to include the National Association of Foreign Trade Zones on February 12, 2013.
3. The intent to have a series of informative discussions within our community to include different meetings with businessmen, banks and political leadership.

I will begin with the Argentine trip where we focused on wine importation, first to our region, but eventually into a Cambria County foreign trade zone.

We brought together a team to cover

1. Wine-making (Glades Pike Winery from Cambria County),
2. Transportation (McQuaide trucking company),
3. Pennsylvania liquor purchasing expertise (previous legal council for PLCB),
4. Political considerations (County Commissioner and State Republican representative), and
5. Business development considerations (professional legal counsel).

Everyone paid for his or her own way with the exception of our professional legal counsel, Jose Latour and his assistant Bianca Saltz. Mr. Latour is a former U.S. Diplomat appointed by Ronald Reagan and has over 20 years experience in negotiating foreign venture capital deals for U.S. companies seeking investors abroad. Since visiting Cambria County last November on a pro bono basis (i.e., without charging professional fees) and meeting with a diverse group of private enterprise stakeholders, local officials, and the Cambria County Airport Commission, Mr. Latour has continued to provide free legal counsel to Cambria County as we have defined the tools and options which will best lead to the economic stimulus and job generation which is the cornerstone of this initiative. In addition to playing a crucial role in negotiations in Argentina, Mr. Latour and Ms. Saltz, both fluent in Spanish, served as the de facto translators during the duration of their visit.

We engaged in multiple meetings both in Buenos Aires and in Mendoza, the largest wine-producing province in Argentina. These meetings included discussions and observations at two vineyards in Mendoza to watch grape harvesting, wine production and bottling operations. Furthermore, in Mendoza we met with senior leadership of vineyard operations and discussed opportunities/concerns with

Argentine wine. In Buenos Aires, meetings with President/CEO Jorge Ortiz and his lawyers over initial contracts went very well, and I have in my hands his signed letter of intent for a Joint Venture Wine Project and desired use of a Cambria County Foreign Trade Zone.

The whole group also attended a detailed two-hour briefing by the US Embassy Department of Commerce in order to better understand international trade associated with Argentina and USA-Argentina relationships.

Furthermore, I remained in Buenos Aires a few additional days in order to secure the letter of intent, to continue ongoing discussions with other Argentina opportunities in the provinces of Misiones, Cordoba, Buenos Aires and Rio Negro along with discussing military issues and opportunities in Argentina.

Not only did all discussions go better than our expectations, but both cultural and political relationship opportunities were also discussed.

This trip by any measure or standard was a resounding success and will lead to win-win opportunities should we be willing and able to embrace them. This is an outstanding beginning. If we can capitalize on future opportunities in other areas such as pharmaceuticals, we can provide a systematic approach to growth in our region once again.

I cannot stress the significance of what this could mean for our area should we get the business, financial and public backing of these opportunities.

SECOND, I would like to discuss my recent activity in Washington DC. In January, Mr. Ed Huttenhower, director of the Small Business Development Center and Associate Dean for Community and Economic Development in the School of Business at Saint Francis, and I put together a series of meetings with congressional offices, a Foreign Trade Zone staffer and several embassies.

This was a superb opportunity to continue garnering political support. We have complete backing by both Representatives Rothfus and Shuster, and Senator Toomey has been backing this project since 2012. As you know, US Senate support is especially important with international trade, and Senator Casey will be approached in the near future.

The visits to five embassies also went very well with a possible business lead from the Bulgarian Embassy already in motion. No promises, but the Bulgarian opportunity is very interesting, and I do not want to interfere with discussions so I will not say more. Three other embassies – Norway, Sweden and Romania – have invited our business leadership to their respective Chambers of Commerce in the United States to begin discussions on business opportunities. We should be very excited to see this happening, and I'm very thankful for having such expertise as Mr. Huttenhower in our community.

The second issue in Washington was the National Association of Foreign Trade Zones meeting on February 12, 2013 – just prior to going to Argentina. This was a very informative session because of the many legislative changes brought about last year (2012). It now appears that we can more efficiently develop our Foreign Trade Zone to better serve our businessmen in the county. But this also brings about a different way to think about the Foreign Trade Zone.

We were initially planning to have the Airport Authority lead the development of the Foreign Trade Zone. With the legislative changes made last year, it is now apparent that it be more beneficial to both the airport and the county to have an economic development construct leading county directed economic development. The Johnstown airport would then feed into the FTZ development rather than the FTZ feeding into the airport authority. This allows for a wider county approach to this economic development opportunity and better fits with associated KOZ and EB-5 activities.

Although there will be much discussion on this issue in the next few weeks, the initial construct of an Economic Development Authority is in the works, and its functions and operations have yet to be finalized. This requirement became clear as we not only looked at the FTZ issues, but also the county strategic planning document that we are now in the process of putting together. One of our top priorities is job creation. Since we do not believe that politicians create jobs, we want to support our business leaders who do create jobs and opportunities.

THE LAST ISSUE I want to cover is the need for further discussion and education within our county over the Foreign Trade Zone concept. In order to better take advantage of our international connections, foreign trade and cultural mix in Cambria County, we will put together a series of meetings to discuss these issues.

We believe separate meetings with businessmen, banks and political leadership are all required, and we would entertain more should the need arise. We will announce the times and places for these meetings in the near future and look forward to our business experts offering their years of experience to our many projects going on in Cambria County – specifically, getting help with the Foreign Trade Zone approval.

We, the commissioners of Cambria County, are excited about what is happening here and what these opportunities represent for our future. We are excited about our business leadership, our outreach programs and the continued care and concern we see everyday for fellow citizens of our great county. We continue to work with private and public entities to meet challenges such as the closing of NDIC or SCI Cresson. But, our future remains strong. People tell us all the time how impressed they are with “folks” from Cambria County. So are we!

God Bless you.