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HOUSTON BUSINESS DELEGATION VISITS CHINA EXPLORES INVESTMENT AND TRADE OPPORTUNITIES

HOUSTON – The Greater Houston Partnership, the primary advocate of the Houston business community, will lead a delegation of Houston area corporate executives and government officials September 5th to September 20th to Xiamen, Qingdao, Dongying, Beijing and Shanghai, China.

The delegation will host a booth at the 15th Annual China International Fair for Investment and Trade in Xiamen. A similar delegation also participated in CFIT in 2009. CFIT is China’s only international investment promotion event aimed at facilitating bilateral investment.

In 2009, GHP signed an agreement of mutual cooperation with the Xiamen General Chamber of Commerce to exchange trade, market and economic involvement; host investment seminars and meetings in both cities; host trade missions; and conduct business market studies and surveys to be shared with industry, governmental and business leaders in both cities. Last year in Houston, GHP hosted business matchmaking and networking activities for a 30-member Xiamen logistics and business delegation.

“The purpose of the mission and our participation in CFIT is to stimulate more trade and investment between the Houston region and China as well as to strengthen our position as a gateway to global markets,” said GHP’s Chief Economic Development Officer Craig J. Richard, CEcD. “With a GDP of \$395.4 billion, 94 foreign consulates, including China, more than 3,100 companies doing business internationally, Houston is a global corporate powerhouse.”

The Houston delegation includes regional leaders from MetroBank; Harry Gee, Jr. & Associates, PLLC; RISC, Inc.; Earth Biological (HK) Group, Ltd.; and the *Chinese Times*.

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“We will market the Houston region as a business magnet for capital investment and business expansion in sectors such as energy, information technology, aerospace and

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aviation, biotechnology and life sciences,” said Houston delegation leader Don Wang, chairman of MetroBank, N.A. and of the Partnership’s Asia, Australia and Oceania Committee.

The delegation will conduct one-on-one meetings and “Invest in Houston” seminars for Chinese investors and discuss a range of topics. The group also will have high level discussions urging Chinese companies to open trade offices and logistics centers as well as set up manufacturing plants in the Houston region. Houston is America’s No. 1 manufacturing city.

This is the Partnership’s fifth mission to China in the last year-and-a-half, and expectations for its success remains high as the Houston region and China remain strong partners in trade, investment and global business collaboration.

In 2010, trade between Houston and China totaled \$9.1 billion and more than 800 Houston companies reported doing business with China. *Uniwold Business* reports that 446 firms (either headquarter or branch locales) in the Houston region operate 2,164 subsidiary locations throughout China; and according to the *Texas Governor’s Office*, Chinese firms operate 7 subsidiaries in the Houston metro.

Houston ties to China:

- China ranks as Houston’s 5th largest international trade partner.
- Houston’s exports to China totaled \$3.5 billion in 2010. During this same period, Houston’s imports from China totaled \$5.6 billion.
- Houston ranks as China’s 13th largest U.S. gateway for air cargo trade and 7th largest U.S. gateway for seaborne trade.
- Total trade between Houston and China has nominally grown by more than \$7.5 billion since 2000, representing a compound annual growth rate of 19.5 percent

The U.S. is the Fujian province’s largest export and its third largest import partner. In 2010, Fujian exports to the U.S. totaled \$14.2 billion and imports from the U.S. were \$3.7 billion.

The Houston region is a global leader in international business. And like Xiamen, the region has an ideal geographic location. And both the Houston Airport System and the Port of Houston make it a primary gateway to the global marketplace.

For more information on the Houston region, call 713-844-3647 or visit Houston.org.

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The Greater Houston Partnership is the primary advocate of the Houston’s business community and is dedicated to building regional economic prosperity. It represents 10 counties: Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, San Jacinto and Waller.

Opportunity Houston is an aggressive five-year marketing and lead generation program that will help grow jobs, increase capital investment and expand foreign trade for the region by the end of 2015. Visit the Greater Houston Partnership on the World Wide Web at houston.org.

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