

Glendening is leading trade mission to Europe; Governor hopes to win business from airlines, Maersk shipping line

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Abstract

For the fourth time in his 4 1/2 years in office, Gov. Parris N. Glendening will travel overseas on a trade mission. His seven-day trip to Europe, which starts tomorrow, will focus on bringing airline and shipping business, as well as cultural offerings, to the state.

Glendening, his wife and seven state employees will visit Denmark, Italy and England -- at a cost of up to \$48,000 to Maryland taxpayers, according to Michael Morrill, the governor's spokesman. After the trade mission ends, the Glendenings will tack on a family vacation at their own expense, Morrill said.

State Transportation Secretary John D. Porcari declined to confirm that the governor would meet with Maersk officials, but said the company remains an attractive target for state recruiting. "We always consider Maersk a potential customer at the port," Porcari said.

Full Text

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During a stop in Copenhagen, the Danish capital, Glendening is to meet with representatives of Maersk Line, according to sources familiar with his plans.

The Danish shipping line and Sea-Land Service Inc. decided to remain in New York last month after rejecting a bid from Maryland officials to build a major terminal for them in Baltimore.

But state officials hope Glendening's visit will build goodwill that could result in the huge shipping firm bestowing business on Baltimore.

State Transportation Secretary John D. Porcari declined to confirm that the governor would meet with Maersk officials, but said the company remains an attractive target for state recruiting. "We always consider Maersk a potential customer at the port," Porcari said.

In Italy, Glendening is to meet with airline officials about the prospect of direct flights between Italy and Baltimore-Washington International Airport.

Glendening also will meet with officials of British Airways in London to try to bring more of the airline's flights from England to BWI.

Frances Hughes **Glendenning**, his wife, plans to meet with representatives of a number of arts institutions about bringing exhibits to Maryland. The governor's office declined to give specifics on those meetings.

A ranking Republican legislator said he was skeptical about the value of such overseas **trips**.

"By and large, these **trips** are for show. They basically showcase the governor, but accomplish very little," said Del. Robert L. Flanagan, the House Republican whip. "The accomplishments that are announced on these **trips** are usually prearranged by staff."

Porcari, however, said international outreach efforts are crucial to the vitality of the port and airport.

"If you're going to bring business over the long term to the port and the airport, you have to go to the customer," Porcari said. "They don't come to you."

Traveling with the Glendenings and Porcari will be Richard C. Mike Lewin, secretary of economic development, and officials of the port and BWI.

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