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HEADLINE: SCHAEFER URGES MORE TRADE TRIPS

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BODY:

Delivering a swan song to a group of business people about the importance of international trade, Gov. William Donald Schaefer yesterday defended his 14 trips abroad as governor and appealed to Parris N. Glendening to keep making the often-controversial sallies after he takes over the office in January.

"My message is simple: please don't let it go," the governor told about 155 people at the World Trade Center in Baltimore. "There are a lot of problems in the city and the state, but this really does pay off. It already has paid off in jobs."

The breakfast featured seven of the people who went on the last of the trade missions that have taken Mr. Schaefer to 25 nations, a jaunt that cost taxpayers \$ 225,000 for the public officials who joined all or part of the trip to Korea, China, Taiwan and Japan.

To a person they praised the trip, in a defense against critics who have dwelled on the trips' cost and have been skeptical of how much of the state's import and export business would have happened, even if the governor had not made trade promotions so much his own job.

"Yes, I came back with contracts," said Harold Adams, chairman of RTKL Baltimore, the state's biggest architectural firm.

RTKL made a deal for a joint venture with an urban planning institute in Anhui province of China, Mr. Adams said. The institute then referred RTKL to a Chinese developer who hired the firm to do the master plan for a new "tourism city" in an undeveloped, mountain region.

The trip produced several other business and governmental accords, but also an embarrassing failure when a deal between Landover-based Multimax Inc. and Anhui Chang Hong Corp. of Hefei, China, to collaborate on a line of personal computers collapsed after it was announced.

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Later in the day, Mr. Glendening praised Mr. Schaefer's emphasis on international trade. But he said he would not be the same globe-trotting front man for Maryland trade as his predecessor.

"You're going to see me actively promoting Maryland in the international community. You just won't see as many trips, or as many people going," Mr. Glendening said.

He said Mr. Schaefer's approach to foreign trade has been "episodic," concentrating on one region one year and a different country or region the next.

Mr. Glendening said his administration will identify one or two nations in each region and concentrate on developing relationships there, believing that a few close relationships will bring more opportunity to Maryland than a greater number of less intimate contacts.

"You're just going to see a slightly different style," Mr. Glendening said. "We're going to look for more predictability."

Mr. Schaefer insisted trade missions need the governor to get them in the door of top foreign government and business leaders and to build relationships with people like shipping titan Chang Yungfa, chairman of a company that calls at the Port of Baltimore.

GRAPHIC: PHOTO, MARK BUGNASKI/SUN STAFF PHOTO, Gov. William Donald Schaefer listens to a report on his Asia trip.

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