



# NEWS RELEASE

## Arizona House of Representatives

Representative Tony Rivero (R-21)

Representative Rosanna Gabaldón (D-2)

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**Monday, August 21, 2017**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## Arizona Leaders Launch Trade Mission with Mexican Counterparts

**STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX** – Representatives Tony Rivero (R-21) and Rosanna Gabaldón (D-2) today announced that a historic bipartisan legislative delegation will visit Mexico this week to promote trade and cooperation between Arizona and Mexico. A coalition of legislative, business, and community leaders from across Arizona announced their foundational efforts to continue their productive dialogue with Mexico during a trade mission to Mexico City and Guanajuato. The trip includes nearly 70 Arizona legislators and business leaders.

**“Given the enormous impact that Mexico has on Arizona’s economy, it’s imperative that we continually dialogue with our partners there,”** said Speaker Mesnard. **“I applaud Reps. Rivero and Gabaldón for their work organizing this delegation and thank my colleagues who will be participating. I’m looking forward to a productive trip.”**

The legislative delegation includes 26 members of the Arizona House and Senate and top leaders from organizations such as Chicanos por la Causa, Arizona Chamber of Commerce, Phoenix Chamber of Commerce, Arizona Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Global Chamber, Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Molera-Alvarez, University of Arizona, Arizona State University, and the Morrison Institute, as well as Rocky Point Mayor Kiko Munro and Vice-Chairman Verlon Jose of the Tohono O’odham Nation. The delegation will meet with business leaders and government officials while traveling to two major trade regions in Mexico.

**“Trade with Mexico plays a vital role in growing Arizona’s economy and employing thousands on both sides of the border,”** said United States Senator Jeff Flake. **“It is imperative that leaders from both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border maintain open discussions on trade issues, and I wholeheartedly support efforts to reinforce pro-growth trade policies.”**

**“Trade is a powerful engine that will drive Arizona’s economic growth, and Mexico is our largest trading partner,” said United States Congressman Trent Franks. “I applaud this legislative delegation for strengthening our bond with Mexico.”**

**“As legislators, it’s not only important that we work to cultivate strong relationships across the aisle for the betterment of both parties,” said United States Congressman Paul Gosar. “It’s equally as important for us to foster constructive partnerships across international borders to improve both nations. The economies of Arizona and Mexico have a symbiotic relationship, and trade delegations like this are important to keep that relationship healthy and productive. I wish the delegation a safe and constructive trip.”**

**“This legislative trip is a tremendous step toward establishing relationships between leaders from Arizona and Mexico,” said Representative Rivero. “There are countless opportunities to build on our relationship to increase trade and trans-border relations, and I look forward to opening the door to improving trade for Arizonans. Our effort is about competing on a global stage. Arizona exports \$22 Billion in goods to our international partners each year and we should be doing more.”**

**“I am honored to work with Rep. Rivero and other legislators to promote Arizona’s economic relationship with Mexico,” said Representative Gabaldón. “Currently, trade with our southern neighbor brings new money into our state and contributes to jobs. We should be able to increase the economic benefits of this partnership by strengthening infrastructure and improving transportation development. I look forward to productive discussions about these issues, which are especially important for Arizona’s border communities.”**

Joining the legislators will be leading members of the business community. The co-chairs of the business delegation will include the former Tempe Mayor Hugh Hallman, business leader Jason Levecke, and the President and CEO of Chicanos por la Causa David Adame.

**“I am honored to co-chair this legislative delegation to Mexico to strengthen our economic bonds with Arizona’s top trading partner. As of this year, Mexico stands at the top of the export markets for Arizona businesses, totaling more than \$8.3 billion in goods exported to Mexico in 2016,” said former Tempe Mayor Hugh Hallman. “Behind these stats are large and small businesses and more than 100,000 Arizonans whose jobs depend on Arizona-Mexico trade and relationships. The success of this decades-long relationship between Arizona and Mexico depends on continuing to build cross-border relationships and creating solutions to strengthen our economies.”**

**“I applaud Rep. Rivero and Rep. Gabaldón for leading this important delegation, and I thank Speaker Mesnard for lending the trade mission the House’s full support,” said Glenn Hamer, President and CEO of the Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry. “We’re right in the middle of renegotiating the globe’s most consequential trade agreement. NAFTA is essential to our nation’s prosperity and has proven central to Arizona’s growth over the last nearly 25 years. Trade missions like these are so important because they allow face-to-face interactions between lawmakers on both sides of the border to understand one**

**another's unique concerns, which I believe will help lead not only to a modernized NAFTA built for today's economy, but will lead to policies in the future that will benefit both countries. I am looking forward to what I am sure will be a very productive trip."**

**"We have worked hard to create this historic trade and business development mission that brings together so many distinguished leaders. It is a great opportunity to seek additional economic opportunities for the great State of Arizona and discuss improving trade for Arizona businesses," said Jason Leveck. "Also, we all owe a great 'thank you' to Representatives Rivero and Gabaldón for their tremendous bipartisan leadership."**

**"Chicanos Por La Causa is proud to be a partner in this effort in hopes that we will bring Mexican tourism, investment and productive relationships back to our great state," said David Adame, President & CEO of Chicanos por la Causa. "Our organization has been a catalyst in sustainable economic development efforts for almost fifty years and this mission gives us an opportunity to expand our reach into Mexico and let the international community know that we mean business."**

**"We are very grateful that the House Local & International Affairs Committee has invited the ASU - Arizona Legislative Academy and other leaders to increase our knowledge of issues and grow relationships with Arizona's largest trading partner country, Mexico," said Andy Tobin of Arizona State University. "This mission brings to light the great opportunity to broaden our focus on the needs of both our economies and citizens and develop new friendships that will last long after we return home."**

Earlier this year, as Chairman of the Local and International Affairs Committee of the House, Representative Rivero welcomed Mexican federal Senator Juan Carlos Romero Hicks, who was followed by 10 members of the Sonora Legislature in Mexico to the Arizona Legislature.

The delegation is scheduled to depart for Mexico City on August 22<sup>nd</sup> and will maintain a solid schedule of trade talks and business negotiations through August 26<sup>th</sup>. Costs for travel and hotel accommodations for the trade mission are being funded entirely by the ASU Foundation, without resorting to limited state resources.

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