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## Congress and Dozens of Cities Mark Sister Cities International Day

*Global Day of Peace to Coincide with Sister Cities International 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and 2016 Annual Conference in Washington, DC July 13 through July 16.*

**WASHINGTON, DC (July 14, 2016)** – Thousands of citizen diplomats, civic leaders, mayors, and members of Congress have banded together to declare July 15, 2016 as Sister Cities International Day. The occasion will be marked by over 600 elected and municipal officials, business leaders, engaged citizen diplomats, and over 125 high school students gathering in Washington, DC for the 60<sup>th</sup> Sister Cities Annual Conference and Anniversary Celebration.

Sister Cities International Day is a call to action for Americans and citizens of the world to come together to celebrate the importance of their communities' commitment to supporting a more peaceful and prosperous future through continued people to people exchanges and city to city partnerships. This day will provide the perfect time for people across the globe to demonstrate how powerful humanity can be when united to promote peace, progress, and prosperity for a better world.

Representatives Ron DeSantis (R-FL) and Joaquin Castro (D-TX) introduced [H.R.775](#) that recognizes July 15 as Sister Cities International Day. Governor of State of Maryland Larry Hogan was the first to proclaim a Sister Cities International Day state-wide. In addition to the Congressional and Gubernatorial declarations, cities across the U.S. and Canada have banded together to issue proclamations to mark this historical day, including: **Baltimore, MD; Bloomington, IN; Belvidere, IL; Coral Gables, FL; Cary, NC; Carmel, IN; Chandler, AZ; Chicago, IL; Cincinnati, OH; Clearwater, FL; Columbus, OH; Gainesville, FL; Hays, KS; Houston, TX; Indianapolis, IN; Lakewood, CO; Lexington, KY; Mesa, AZ; Milwaukee, WI; Muscatine, IA; Muskegon, MI; Nashville, TN; Owensboro, KY; Palm Desert, CA; Pembroke Park, FL; Philadelphia, PA; Prescott, AZ; Richmond, CA; Rochester, NY; San Antonio, TX; San Diego, CA; San Jose, CA; Santa Barbara, CA; Scottsdale, AZ; Seattle, WA; Sierra Vista, AZ; Spokane, WA; Stillwater, OK; Tacoma, WA; Tampa, FL; Tempe, AZ; Thunder Bay, ON, CA; Vandalia, OH; Virginia Beach, VA and Washington, DC.**

The 2016 Conference will feature mayors, city officials, diplomats, and business and political leaders, including: **Mary Kane**, President and CEO, Sister Cities International; **Mary Beth Albright**, Food Attorney, Food Writer and Food Network Star Finalist; **Governor Ziad Chebib**, Beirut, Lebanon; **Donté Lamar Stallworth**, Former NFL Player; **Anthony A. Williams**, Mayor of Washington, DC (1999 – 2007), and Chief Executive Officer, Federal City Council; **Mayor Farhad Niyaaesh**, Herat, Afghanistan; **Admiral Thad Allen**, Vice President, Booz Allen Hamilton and former United States Coast Guard admiral; **Jane Chu**, Chairman, National Endowment for the Arts; **Evan Ryan**, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State; **Mayor Muriel Bowser**, Washington, DC, **Councillor Aileen Graham**, Belfast City Council; **Sarah Heck**, Director of Global Engagement, National Security Council, White House; **Sheldon Himelfarb**, President and CEO, PeaceTech Lab; **Moira Whelan**, former Deputy Assistant Secretary for Digital Strategy, Bureau of Public Affairs, U.S. Department of State; **David Beame**, Event Director, Global Citizen; **Norm Mineta**, President and CEO of Mineta and Associates, LLC and former U.S. Secretary of Commerce and U.S. Secretary of Transportation; **Andy Rabens**, Special Advisor for Global Youth Issues, U.S. Department of State.

As part of this year's Conference, a separate [Youth Leadership Summit](#) for high school students (ages 14-18) will convene around the theme "Peace through People." The Summit is designed to engage the next



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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generation of leaders and expose them to important global challenges through a simulation led by the U.S. Diplomacy Center, as well as various panels and high level briefings.

For more information about the Conference, visit [www.SisterCitiesConference.org](http://www.SisterCitiesConference.org), for more stories focused on sister cities' 60 years of impact, follow along [here](#), and for the 2016 conference agenda, visit <http://sistercities.org/2016agenda>.

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### **About Sister Cities International**

Founded by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1956, Sister Cities International serves as the national membership organization for 570 member communities with relationships in 2,300 communities in 150 countries on six continents. This sister city network unites tens of thousands of citizen diplomats and volunteers who work tirelessly to promote the organizations' mission of creating world peace and understanding through economic and sustainable development programs, youth and education projects, arts and culture, and humanitarian assistance.

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