



## **Maine governor leads overseas wind trade mission**

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AUGUSTA, Maine - Hoping to trumpet the state's burgeoning role as a player in the wind-power industry, Maine Gov. John Baldacci will lead a weeklong trade mission to Germany and Spain in which participants hope to cultivate business contacts and attract investors.

The delegation of 23 businesses and individuals is scheduled to leave Saturday for the trip, which is coordinated by the nonprofit Maine International Trade Center. Stops include Madrid and Zaragoza, Spain, and Bremen and Bremerhaven, both in Germany.

During the trade mission, participants will meet with potential business partners, explore joint venture opportunities and have the chance to attend southern Europe's largest wind energy trade show in Spain. Baldacci will speak to Spanish and German industries at two renewable energy briefings.

The governor will also speak on the development of the industry in Maine, which the trade center said is home to more than 95 percent of installed wind power in New England. Maine has two major wind farms in operation; three more are under construction and several others are in earlier developmental phases. Opportunities to generate wind power offshore are also being explored.

On the international stage, Germany and Spain rank second and third respectively in wind-energy production and installation. Although the United States already ranks first, it's seen by European investors as a next step for expansion, the trade center said.

"Europeans are very aggressive now in investing in wind energy," trade center President Janine Bisailon-Cary said Wednesday. "We'll be one of the first northeastern states to go over and present ourselves to these major wind investors."

Bisailon-Cary noted that Spain's Iberdrola and Canada's Emera and Trans-Canada have invested in Maine's energy sector, and Germany has recently invested in developments in both Maine and Quebec. She said many wind components destined for New England and Canada are shipped through Maine's ports.

Trade mission participants include Maine companies that build, supply and provide logistics for wind projects. Among them are Cianbro Corp., Reed & Reed, Bath Iron Works, Sprague Energy, law firms involved in projects, and Northern Maine Community College, which has a new wind-energy technology program.

"It is time for us to give the message to Europe and the world that Maine is committed to renewable energy, and has the intent and capacities to be a leader in both on and offshore wind," Baldacci said in a statement.

The Maine International Trade Center, which provides trade counseling and technical assistance, has led annual trade missions to Europe, Latin America, and Asia and participated in major trade shows since it was formed in 1996. The upcoming trade mission is financed almost entirely with private funds, Bisailon-Cary said.

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