

Wyoming sets up Taipei office

Written by Taipei Times

Thursday, 04 October 2018 06:46 -



Wyoming Governor Matt Mead announces the opening of the State of Wyoming-Asia Pacific Trade Office in Taipei yesterday.

Photo: Lu I-hsuan, Taipei Times

Wyoming Governor Matt Mead yesterday oversaw the opening of a Wyoming trade office in Taipei designed to facilitate bilateral exchanges in technology, tourism and education, marking the launch of the first foreign mission office in Taiwan since 2008.

Mead, who is visiting Taiwan for the third time, told a news conference at the Sherwood Taipei (香格里拉) that the idea to set up the US state's first overseas trade office in 30 years in Taiwan started to take shape after his first visit five years ago.

Mead said he chose Taiwan because of its democratic achievements, as well as the warmth and hospitality of its people.

"But we also see the marvel that is Taiwan. The technology development this country has had has been nothing short of amazing. When we think about technology that we use, for example, in the US, we know so many of the components and inventions come from Taiwan and Taiwan people," Mead said.

By establishing the State of Wyoming-Asia Pacific Trade Office, Mead said he hopes to expand his state's technologies, such as "blockchain to livestock" and "clean coal," and to promote tourism and educational exchanges between Taiwan and the "cowboy state."

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As Wyoming is leading research in transforming carbon dioxide into viable products, Mead said he would also like to see more cooperation with Taiwan in this area.

Asked if he has received any pressure from China, Mead said that Beijing contacted him during his trip to Taiwan last year, but not this time.

“We are an independent state and we believe Taiwan has been a good friend for the US and for Wyoming,” he said. “China will have a few points I am sure, but I am the governor of the state of Wyoming and my responsibility is to do the best for the citizens of Wyoming.”

Mead said he believes that establishing the office in Taiwan is in the best interest of Wyoming citizens and hopes it would also benefit Taiwanese.

Office Director Chester Chu (許錫欽), who had worked in the private sector to promote Taiwan’s healthcare industry in the US, said the office is the first foreign mission to be established in Taiwan since 2008, calling it a “diplomatic breakthrough.”

Wyoming is the seventh US state to establish an office in Taiwan, Chu said.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2018/10/04](#)