

**Parliamentary Travel Report**

**Washington DC/New York Visit  
November 2009**

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## **Overview**

The purpose of this brief tour was to conduct a series of meetings with industry, government and community representatives in both Washington DC and New York.

As the Shadow Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader, I have an interest in a broad range of policy portfolios.

During the visit I was able to meet with representatives in corrections, education, law enforcement, energy resources, Australian support services, financial services, political and issues management.

The visit was thoroughly rewarding and provided me with a range of ideas which will assist me in my role as both a local member as well as state legislature.

## **Itinerary**

During October – November 2009, I conducted a ten day tour of Washington DC and New York.

Between 28 October and 30 October, I was based in Washington DC. During this time, I conducted visits to:

- Montgomery County Detention facility
- Montgomery County Correctional Facility
- Montgomery Blair High School
- White House
- Library of Congress

Between 31 October and 3 November, I visited New York. Whilst in New York, I undertook visits with the following organisations:

- Standard and Poors
- Victorian Government (DIIRD Representative)
- Emerald Power Corporation
- Advance Organisation
- New York Stock Exchange

Between 4 November and 6 November I returned to Washington DC and visited the following organisations:

- Australian Embassy
- Adfero Group
- CATO Institute
- Center for Australia and New Zealand Studies, Georgetown University
- Austrade
- Resurgent Republic
- US Congress
- George Washington University

## Montgomery County Detention Facility

The Montgomery County Detention Facility is located at 1307 Seven Locks Road, Rockville, Maryland.

The Montgomery County Detention Center (MCDC) is *“responsible for the intake and processing of adult male and female offenders and will maintain a capacity of up to 200 inmates. Approximately 16,000 offenders annually arrive at the Central Processing Unit, providing psychological screening, medical screening, and risk assessment to determine the appropriate classification level of inmates and provides for initial care custody, and security of inmates for up to 72 hours prior to transfer to the Montgomery County Correctional Facility (MCCF)”*<sup>1</sup>.

The Central Processing Unit (CPU), located behind the Montgomery County Detention Center (MCDC), *“provides law enforcement processing of all arrested offenders. All arrestees are arraigned before Maryland District Court Commissioners at the CPU who determine the arrestees release conditions. If an arrestee is not released from the CPU, but incarcerated into the MCDC, another bond hearing is conducted (Monday-Friday) via closed circuit television between the Montgomery County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation Pre-Trial Services Unit (PTSU), located at the MCDC, and the District Court”*<sup>2</sup>.

At the Detention Facility, the staff conducted a full tour of the operation. It was a very enlightening visit as it provided an overview of the processing of offenders from arrest and leading up to their detainment at the County Correctional facility.

The facility is quite old with sections of the prison being decommissioned. This demonstrated the need for a modern up to date prison facility. The visit provided a great opportunity to understand how the County deals with offenders. During the visit I met with a number of personnel including:

- James L Jones, Deputy Warden
- Capt Amando Gomes, Records Manager
- Cynthia Distance-Thompson, Correction Specialist IV

### Key issues for Victoria:

- The effective use of stun guns as a deterrent within our prison system
- The benefits of having a range of prison resources within a single facility to ensure the timely processing of offenders
- The need for a modern facility to cater for the needs of both prison staff and inmates.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/doctmpl.asp?url=/content/DOCR/MCDC/MCDCMain.asp>

<sup>2</sup> <http://wikimapia.org/14300844/Montgomery-County-Detention-Center>



## **Montgomery County Correctional Facility**

The Montgomery County Detention Facility is located at 22880 Whelan Lane, Boyds, Maryland.

The Montgomery County Correctional Facility (MCCF), located in Boyds Maryland (near Clarksburg), is responsible *“for the custody and care of male and female offenders who are either in a pre-trial status or serving sentences of up to 18 months. The facility's current capacity is 1,028 inmates. Following an initial intake screening at the Montgomery County Detention Center (MCDC), inmates are transferred to the Correctional Facility.*

*MCCF is organized into three major functional areas (Custody & Security, Inmate Services & Programs, and Facility Operations); each area is managed by a Deputy Warden.*

*The mission of the Correctional Facility is to protect and serve the citizens of Montgomery County and the general public by providing progressive and comprehensive correctional services to all inmates. This is accomplished by the implementation of a wide variety of programs and services including:*

- *A safe and secure environment for inmates, staff, and visitors*
- *Acute and chronic medical care and dental services*
- *Religious services, a therapeutic substance abuse program, and self-help programs*
- *A youthful offender unit (Moral Reconciliation Therapy-MRT) treatment program for inmates ages 21 and under*
- *MRT treatment programs for both adult men and women*
- *Mental health services for crisis intervention, assessment, treatment and a Crisis Intervention Unit (CIU) to provide a safe and humane environment*

*for offenders exhibiting acute and/or chronic symptoms that preclude them from general population housing.*

- *The Model Learning Center, which operates full-time educational, vocational, and special education programs*
- *A full service library, multi-purpose and recreation program areas, and therapeutic recreational programs*
- *A classification and case management system to determine risk and custody level and to assess each inmate's needs*
- *Community release social services and judicial coordination to assist with effective community and family reintegration*
- *An employment development program which instills positive work habits and skills to enhance employability upon release*
- *A One Stop Employment Center to assist with skills assessment and job searches to secure sustainable post release employment*

*Inmates' eligibility and program interests are determined upon entry into the facility. Each inmate is assigned a Case Manager whose responsibilities include facilitating successful community reintegration by aiding the offender with difficult decisions, making appropriate referrals, and providing general guidance. All inmates are encouraged to participate in available programs and to utilize their time wisely and productively while at the facility”<sup>3</sup>.*

At the Correctional facility, I had the opportunity to tour the entire operation. It was a very impressive establishment. The facility has been developed with state of the art technology. Plus there is a focus on locating prison staff amongst the prison population. This new approach has seen the facility receive visits from many international delegations.



I was particularly interested in the approach adopted with respect to juvenile offenders. Furthermore, many offenders are involved in a certified cooking program which has proven successful with job placements upon completing their sentence.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/doctmpl.asp?url=/content/DOCR/MCCF/MCCFMain.asp>

During the visit I met with a number of personnel including:

- Robert Green, Warden
- Sgt Randall Wylie, Accreditation Manager
- Gale Starkey, Re-Entry Unit Manager

Key issues for Victoria:

- The benefits of a modern, clean, bright, open prison facility – beneficial to both in mates and staff alike
- The benefits of locating staff amongst the prison population (as opposed to being located in a separated room). This has had a marked benefit on the prison population
- Providing adequate resources for staff (eg. Gym) has promoted staff morale
- Access to a fully operational library
- Juvenile justice program that focuses on educating young offenders
- Provision of certified training has seen many in mates obtain employment in hospitality due to obtaining accreditation whilst in prison

### **Montgomery Blair High School**

Montgomery Blair High School is located at 51 University Boulevard East, Silver Spring, Maryland. The school was founded in 1925 and has grown to become the biggest in Montgomery County, educating almost 3,000 students<sup>4</sup>.

At Montgomery Blair High School, I met with Bertina Williams (teacher, business faculty) who provided a tour of the school facilities. These facilities were extremely impressive and seemed more reflective of an Australian University.

It was very important to see a Government run-school which catered for such a significant number of students. The school provided an understanding of how such a school could operate if Victorian secondary facilities were amalgamated to provide for such a large number of students. It was interesting to talk to the teaching staff to gain their views on the challenges they face in a large faculty.

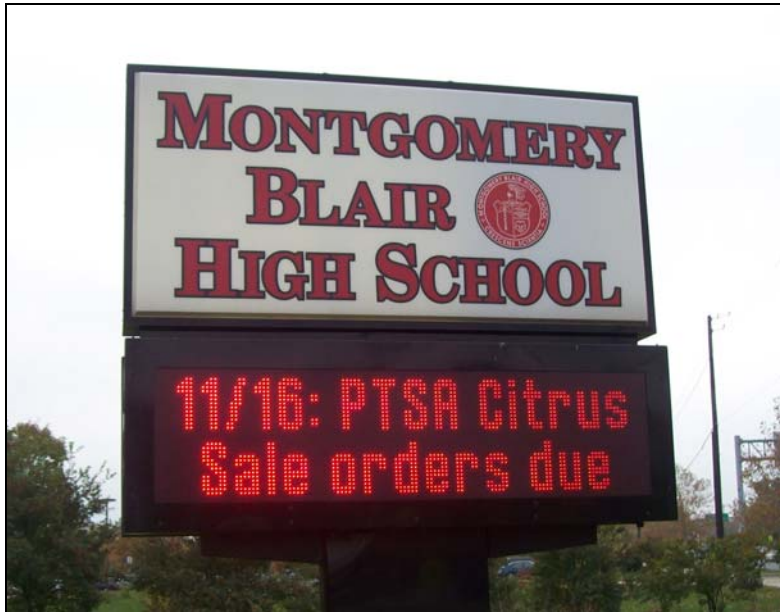
Key issues for Victoria:

- An understanding of how a Secondary facility may operate if catering for a student body of around 3,000 students
- The collegiate nature of the student body who are very committed to their school's values

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.mbhs.edu/about/history.php>

- The vast array of sporting and academic opportunities for students in a larger facility
- The facility was remarkably clean in comparison to many Victorian schools
- The facilities were noticeably modern
- The sports facilities were clearly state of the art
- Many of the facilities resembled those found within a Victorian University



## White House

The White House is the home of the US President. The building has housed every President since President John Adams took up residence in 1800<sup>5</sup>.

I undertook a tour of the White House with Deon Thompson, Secret Service Agent. Deon has served as an agent for every US President since President Richard Nixon.

His tour was certainly enlightening and was able to promote a very thorough understanding of the operation of the Presidency and the White House.



## Library of Congress

The Library of Congress was *“established by an act of Congress in 1800 when President John Adams signed a bill providing for the transfer of the seat of government from Philadelphia to the new capital city of Washington. The legislation described a reference library for Congress only, containing “such books as may be necessary for the use of Congress - and for putting up a suitable apartment for containing them therein...” Established with \$5,000 appropriated by the legislation, the original library was housed in the new Capitol until August 1814, when invading British troops set fire to the Capitol Building, burning and pillaging the contents of the small library.*

*Within a month, retired President Thomas Jefferson offered his personal library as a replacement. Jefferson had spent 50 years accumulating books, “putting by everything which related to America, and indeed whatever was rare and valuable in every science”; his library was considered to be one of the finest in the United States. In offering his collection to Congress, Jefferson*

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.whitehouse.gov/about/history>

*anticipated controversy over the nature of his collection, which included books in foreign languages and volumes of philosophy, science, literature, and other topics not normally viewed as part of a legislative library. He wrote, "I do not know that it contains any branch of science which Congress would wish to exclude from their collection; there is, in fact, no subject to which a Member of Congress may not have occasion to refer<sup>6</sup>."*

The Library is recognised as one of the most significant libraries in the world. It has a collection of *"more than 130 million items includes more than 29 million cataloged books and other print materials in 460 languages; more than 58 million manuscripts; the largest rare book collection in North America; and the world's largest collection of legal materials, films, maps, sheet music and sound recordings"*<sup>7</sup>.

At the Library of Congress, I met with Sharon Gray who has been employed at the Library for many years. The library was a fascinating building and demonstrated both the challenges and potential for Government-based libraries to provide for a community that is now becoming not only national but international. It is clear that the organisation was a leader in the collation of international publications – given that it tries to collect every publication produced throughout the world.

#### Key issues for Victoria:

- The benefit of an effectively-run library system that meets the needs of a community – particularly government representatives and the public service
- The maintenance of a library of this calibre requires significant funding which may be difficult in a Victorian setting

#### **Standard and Poors**

Standard and Poors is a recognised world leader in the provision of credit ratings, indices, investment research, risk evaluations and solutions. The organisation has been in operation for almost 150 years and is also widely known for maintaining one of the most widely followed indices of large-cap American stocks: the S&P 500. In 2007, the S&P 500 celebrated its 50th anniversary<sup>8</sup>.

The organisation has offices in 23 countries. Its corporate international head office is located at 55 Water Street, New York.

In New York, I met with Paul Coughlin, Executive Managing Director, Corporate and Government Ratings. Paul provided an overview of the economic outlook of the United States in light of the recent Global Financial

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.loc.gov/about/history.html>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.loc.gov/about/history.html>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.standardandpoors.com/about-sp/main/en/us/>

Crisis. He was also able to present the current environment for both Australia and Victoria in regard to its long term economic outlook. As a former Victorian resident, Paul was able to provide an interesting assessment of the Victorian economy when compared to other economies throughout the world.

Key issues for Victoria:

- An understanding of the necessity of good governance principles with the management of the State economy
- An understanding of Victoria (and Australia's) economic positioning in comparison to the operation of other economies throughout the world
- The impact of growing internal debt as a future liability on the Victorian economy

**Victorian Government (DIIRD Representative)**

The Victorian Government has established a number of offices overseas for the purpose of promoting Victoria with particular emphasis on trade, investment and tourism. These offices fall within the Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development.

Within the United States, this body is headed by Commissioner for the Americas', Mr Victor Pertou. DIIRD has offices located in San Francisco, Chicago and New York. The New York office is located at 34<sup>th</sup> Floor, 150 E 42nd Street.<sup>9</sup>

I met with Simon Guttman, Investment Manager, New York. Our discussions focussed on the role of the Victorian Government in promoting Victorian industry both in terms of investment and export opportunities.



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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.diird.vic.gov.au/about-diird/contacts-and-locations/overseas-offices>

We spoke of the many challenges facing Victorian exporters and the strategic approach adopted by the Victorian Government in working collaboratively with other agencies includes Austrade and the Australian Embassy.

Key issues for Victoria:

- The Victorian Government can play a positive role in promoting Victoria – in terms of tourism, export and investment
- The Victorian Government has established some links in the US with respect to developing positive (both relational and financial) relationships between the two locations
- The Victorian Government needs clear and measurable target(s) to ensure that the roles of its DIIRD representatives are strategic.

**Emerald Power Corporation**

The Emerald Power Corporation is a New York based renewable energy producer. Principally, the organisation is focussed on converting waste (such as municipal waste, old tyres, agricultural waste and manure) to produce a renewable energy. By utilising Anaerobic Thermal Conversion (ATC), this conversion is undertaken without the need for incineration<sup>10</sup>.

I met with Robert Mahony, Managing Director, of the Emerald Power Corporation. Robert provided an overview of the development of his new energy renewal program that he is currently establishing in the US. He discussed the political challenges he is facing in establishing his new energy source. This discussion proved very informative as this energy source could potentially be applied in Victoria. Furthermore, many of the challenges that Robert's organisation are facing in the US would be similar in Victoria.

Key issues for Victoria:

- There are benefits in exploring other forms of renewable energy production that are being trialled in the US
- The development of new forms of energy production will face obstacles from entrenched interest bodies. Therefore it is important to ensure that the future of industries currently involved in existing energy are considered when making any future decision about moves towards renewable energy

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.emeraldpower.com/home/index.php>

## Advance Organisation

The Advance Organisation was established in 2002 and is headquartered in New York.

The organisation describes itself as a *“dynamic and diverse global community of Australian professionals overseas to advance Australia and Australians”*<sup>11</sup>. The organisation was founded as principally a networking organisation for Australian professionals working abroad. Since its inception, the organisation has been able to broaden its approach to *“represent valuable talent and expertise for individual businesses and industries, they also create extensive networks, spheres of influence and opportunities that benefit Australia as a whole”*<sup>12</sup>.

The organisation currently has about 10,000 members throughout the world<sup>13</sup>. They currently operate from New York and London.

At the Advance organisation, I had an extremely informative meeting with the organisation’s CEO, Ms Serafina Maiorano. Serafina provided an overview of the role of engaging with ex-pats living abroad and the networking opportunities for these individuals.



A number of issues were discussed with particular emphasis on Victorian ex-pats and possible methods to engage with these individuals for the purpose of both recruitment, but more importantly future prospects for drawing on their

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<sup>11</sup> <http://advance.org/en/cms/?16>

<sup>12</sup> <http://advance.org/en/cms/?16>

<sup>13</sup> Advance, Global Australians (publication)

collective experiences through mentoring and advice to community based organisations.

The meeting provided me with an opportunity to consider future roles for the Victorian Government to access the collective benefit of the many thousands of highly skilled Victorians working abroad.

Key issues for Victoria:

- The Advance Organisation can play a lead role in assisting exporters to promote their businesses in foreign markets
- There is a greater need to promote the benefits of the organisation to both ex-pats as well as business and community leaders trying to develop overseas contacts
- This organisation may act as a conduit to link successful ex-Victorians to students, business and community leaders to assist in programs such as mentoring.

**New York Stock Exchange**

During my visit to New York, I had the opportunity to meet with a number of traders on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. This was a fantastic opportunity to discuss first hand with traders from a range of firms on the economic outlook for the United States. They also provided an interesting assessment of the US Government's handling of economic stimulus programs and the impact of rising debt on not only the national economy but business confidence.



During this visit, I met with:

- Luis Rhi, Vice President, Portfolio Manager, Senior Analyst and Investment Management with BNY Mellon. Started in 2007 through a merger between The Bank of New York Company, Inc. and Mellon Financial Corporation of Pittsburgh<sup>14</sup>. BNY Mellon has US \$966 billion under management and US \$22.1 trillion under custody or administration\*<sup>15</sup>.
- James Lilly, NYSE Floor Broker with Griswold. Griswold is an independent agency-only brokerage firm formed in 1988<sup>16</sup>.
- Justin Flinn, Assistant Vice President, Pershing. Formed in 1939, the Pershing Company is an affiliate of BNY Mellon with over \$747.6 billion in assets<sup>17</sup>.

#### Key issues for Victoria:

- A number of senior financial figures expressed their deep concern with Government's that focus on increasing debt levels as a short term solution to the global financial crisis.

#### **Australian Embassy**

The Australian Embassy is located at 1601 Massachusetts Ave, NW. At the Embassy, I met with Ms Elizabeth Ward, Minister-Counsellor (Trade). Ms Ward had currently assumed higher duties due to the illness of the Australian Ambassador.

The meeting provided an overview of the Australian Government's strategy to promote Australia (and particularly trade) into the United States. The meeting also provided an opportunity to gain a national assessment of the role of the Victorian Government's representatives in the United States. This was particularly beneficial given that other States have minimal (if any) on the ground representation in the United States.

#### Key issues for Victoria:

- Ensure that key embassy officials are fully appraised of the State's trade, investment, export and tourism strategies – including connecting with DIIRD's foreign representatives

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<sup>14</sup> <http://www.bnymellon.com/about/history/index.html>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.bnymellon.com/about/ataglance.html>

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.griswoldco.com>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.pershing.com>

## **Adfero Group**

The Adfero Group is a strategic public relations firm based in Washington DC. The organisation provides support and advice to a number of major American clients with issues management, public awareness and education campaigns as well as advocacy on issues<sup>18</sup>.

I met with Matthew Zablud who is a senior political lobbyist with the organisation. He works as a lobbyist for a range of clients. Matthew has previously worked in both Victoria and also as an adviser on the 2004 Bush-Cheney Presidential Campaign.

The meeting with Matthew was very informative as we discussed strategies associated with issues management. This discussion was very pertinent given that members of parliament often have to develop a range of political strategies to deal with local, regional, state wide and national issues that require a thoroughly developed strategy.

## **CATO Institute**

The Cato Institute was founded in 1977 by Edward H. Crane. The organisation describes itself as a *“non-profit public policy research foundation headquartered in Washington, D.C. The Institute is named for [Cato's Letters](#), a series of libertarian pamphlets that helped lay the philosophical foundation for the American Revolution”*<sup>19</sup>.

The organisation is a conservative libertarian think tank. CATO's mission is to *“increase the understanding of public policies based on the principles of limited government, free markets, individual liberty, and peace. The Institute will use the most effective means to originate, advocate, promote, and disseminate applicable policy proposals that create free, open, and civil societies in the United States and throughout the world”*<sup>20</sup>.

At the Institute, I met with Sallie James, Trade Policy Analyst, and Tanja Stumberger, Research Associate. The meeting was most informative as both Sallie and Tanja were able to provide an update on some of the key policy issues facing the US economy. Given that Sallie is an ex-pat, she was able to examine these key policy issues within an Australian context.

The meeting also provided an opportunity to discuss broader economic and social policies which are being explored within the US Congress. The meeting provided for good policy debate and certainly challenged some of my own policy beliefs.

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<sup>18</sup> <http://www.adfero.com/whoweare/aboutus/>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.cato.org/about.php#>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.cato.org/about.php#>



Key issues for Victoria:

- These discussions identified the need for future Victorian policies to be based on sound economic principles.
- There is a need for the Victorian Government to examine the failures of the US policy management to ensure that problems that bedeviled the American system are not repeated within our State.

**Georgetown University**

Georgetown University was established in 1773 under *“the vision of John Carroll, an American-born, European-educated Jesuit priest”*<sup>21</sup>. It is stated that Carroll’s goal was to secure *“the future of American Catholicism through education -- in particular, through the establishment of a pre-eminent Catholic place of higher learning”*<sup>22</sup>.

The Center for Australian and New Zealand Studies was established at Georgetown University in August 1995 with funding from the Australia and New Zealand Governments. The Center offers students *“a program of courses about Australia and New Zealand in such disciplines as history, government, international affairs, sociology, literature, and fine arts. Instruction is by Georgetown faculty members; a Fulbright Visiting Professor of New Zealand Studies generously underwritten by the New Zealand-United States Educational Foundation; and adjunct faculty from the United States and overseas”*<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>21</sup> <http://explore.georgetown.edu/documents/?DocumentID=736>

<sup>22</sup> <http://explore.georgetown.edu/documents/?DocumentID=736>

<sup>23</sup> <http://canz.georgetown.edu/about/>

I met with Dr Alan Tidwell, Director of The Center for Australian and New Zealand Studies. The Center is located at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service. Dr Tidwell provided me with an overview of the operation of the University and more particularly the benefits of having an Australian Centre for Studies in an American University. Discussions also focussed on the ability of Australian students/academics to study abroad at the Center.

Whilst at the venue, I attended a lecture at the Center that was being conducted by a visiting Fulbright scholar Jon Johansson.

#### Key issues for Victoria:

- Victorian Universities could enhance dialogue with the Center to identify the possibility for a greater opportunity for academics and students to gain broader experience by attending the Center
- Identify possibilities for the Center to be incorporated as a potential advocate for Victoria's trade, investment and tourist agenda

#### **Austrade**

The Australian Trade Organisation (Austrade) is the trade and investment development arm of the Commonwealth Government. It operates as a statutory agency of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade<sup>24</sup>.

The organisation states that its aim is to assist *“Australian businesses contribute to national prosperity by succeeding in trade and investment, internationally, and promoting and supporting productive foreign investment into Australia. Austrade:*

- *Delivers services that assist Australian businesses initiate, sustain and grow trade and outward investment.*
- *Promotes Australia as an inward investment destination and, with the States and Territories, supports the inflow of productive foreign direct investment.*
- *Administers the Export Market Development Grants scheme.*
- *Undertakes initiatives designed to improve community awareness of, and commitment to, international trade and investment.*
- *Provides advice to the Australian Government on its trade and investment development activities.*
- *Delivers consular, passport and other government services in designated overseas locations.”*

Austrade operates through a global network of offices in over 110 locations in more than 60 countries. Within the United States, Austrade operates from 16 locations. I attended Austrade's Washington DC office located at the Australian Embassy.

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<sup>24</sup> <http://www.austrade.gov.au/About-Austrade/default.aspx>

I met with Trade Commissioner Brendhan Egan who has significant experience in promoting Australian Trade in the United States. We discussed a range of processes and opportunities available to Australian manufacturers seeking to either export or establish a manufacturing/distribution base in the United States.

Discussions also focussed on the role of the Victorian Government's trade advisor and the impact and the role they have played in securing benefits for Victorian industry. This discussion was framed in the context of the approach adopted by other Australian states.



#### Key issues for Victoria:

- Similar to the Australian Embassy, it is important that key Austrade officials are fully apprised of the State's trade, investment, export and tourism strategies – including connecting with DIIRD's foreign representatives

#### **Resurgent Republic**

The Resurgent Republic is an organization dedicated to *“shaping the debate over the proper role of government. It is an independent, not-for-profit organization modeled on Democracy Corps, which has made important contributions to the public debate from the left and has proven to be a valuable resource for labor unions, environmentalists, and liberal Congressional leaders.*

*Resurgent Republic seeks to replicate on the right the success Democracy Corps has enjoyed on the left. As does Democracy Corps, Resurgent Republic makes survey and focus group results publicly available. (The organisation promotes) conservative free market principles such as lower*

*taxes and economic growth, and support strong national defense policies. Resurgent Republic has become a valuable resource for the general public, policy makers, Congressional leaders and others that are aligned with us on these important issues”.*

I met with Mr Luke Frans, Executive Director of the Resurgent Republic. Our discussions were interesting because it provided an insight in the policy issues impacting on Congress in a range of economic and social policies. Whilst the organisation is focussed on American politics, there are clearly similarities in the policy challenges and approaches affecting both the United States and Australia (and particularly Victoria). The approach to issues such as taxation, health and education were key discussion points and provided an interesting counterpoint to the approaches adopted within Victoria.

## **US Congress**

The US Congress is home to the national legislature. First enacted in 1789, the current Congress is in its 111<sup>th</sup> sitting<sup>25</sup>.

At Congress, I had the opportunity to meet with a number of members of the US Congress. Principally, I met with Rep. Joe Wilson and his staff assistant Elliott Fraser. Rep. Wilson represents the 2<sup>nd</sup> District of South Carolina. Prior to his election, he served seventeen years in the South Carolina State Senate where he was elected Chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee, the first Republican Chairman since Reconstruction<sup>26</sup>.

Rep. Wilson was able to provide a comprehensive overview of the operation of Congress whilst in session. Our discussions covered a range of shared economic and social policy issues which are facing both the Victorian and US legislatures. His seventeen years experience in the state legislature was particularly pertinent to our discussions.

During this visit, I was able to witness debating of legislation plus meeting a number of members of congress. These included:

- Rep. Rob Wittman, representing 1<sup>st</sup> District of Virginia. Rep. Wittman was elected to Congress in December 2007<sup>27</sup>.
- Rep. Mike Pence, representing 6<sup>th</sup> District of Indiana. Rep. Pence was elected to Congress in 2000 and in November 2008, was unanimously elected by House Republicans to serve as House Republican Conference Chairman. In his role as Conference Chairman, he helps to develop and disseminate the message of the Republican Conference and to promote its Members<sup>28</sup>.

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<sup>25</sup> [http://clerk.house.gov/art\\_history/house\\_history/index.html](http://clerk.house.gov/art_history/house_history/index.html)

<sup>26</sup> [http://www.joewilson.house.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=37&Itemid=34](http://www.joewilson.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=37&Itemid=34)

<sup>27</sup> [http://www.wittman.house.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=12&Itemid=34](http://www.wittman.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=12&Itemid=34)

<sup>28</sup> [http://www.mikepence.house.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=54&Itemid=53](http://www.mikepence.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=54&Itemid=53)



## **George Washington University**

The George Washington University was created in “1821 through an Act of the Congress, fulfilling George Washington’s vision of an institution in the nation’s capital dedicated to educating and preparing future leaders”.<sup>29</sup>

The University educates more than “20,000 students — from all 50 states, the District and more than 130 countries — studying a rich range of disciplines: from forensic science and creative writing to international affairs and computer engineering, as well as medicine, public health, the law and public policy”.<sup>30</sup>

I met with Associate Dean Lawrence Singleton from the University’s Business School. Dean Singleton provided an overview of the operations of the faculty. The meeting was very informative as we discussed the national focus on recruiting students into the University.

Furthermore, discussions focussed on the targeted approach of the university’s curriculum to ensure that students were being provided with contemporary business skills to develop America’s future business leaders.

I undertook a tour of the facility which was equally impressive. The school was more reflective of a modern office complex rather than a university campus. The provision of state of the art educational facilities demonstrated

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<sup>29</sup> <http://www.gwu.edu/explore/aboutgw>

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.gwu.edu/explore/aboutgw>

that the University's Business School was a leading University within the nation.

Discussions also focussed on the establishment of satellite campus in other nations which has been prevalent for Victorian-based Universities.



Key issues for Victoria:

- Victoria's Business Schools could potential enhance both their curriculum and facilities by visiting centres such as the George Washington Business School
- Possibly assist in developing strategies for potentially attracting interstate and overseas students