

# First Minister in the US and Canada to boost trade with Wales' most important business partner

The visit will focus on boosting trade and investment between Wales and the US.

The United States is Wales' largest inward investor, with 270 US-owned companies based in Wales employing almost 50,000 people. Last year, Wales secured investment from 24 American-owned companies that will create and safeguard nearly 1,500 Welsh jobs.

America is also one of Wales' top trading partners. The value of Welsh exports to the USA continues to rise and was worth £2.1bn to the Welsh economy in 2016.

Over the week, the First Minister will meet with US and Canadian companies with a presence in Wales and will discuss trade and business links with political representatives.

On Wednesday, the First Minister will address the United Nations about his commitment to advancing gender equality and women's rights. He will also meet with Hillary Clinton to discuss how they can strengthen links between Wales and the US.

The First Minister will host a St David's Day reception on Capitol Hill for key political figures and investors, and an event in New York – attended by actor Luke Evans – to promote Wales as a top tourist destination.

Speaking ahead of the visit, First Minister Carwyn Jones said:

“America is Wales' most important business partner and I want to build on the strong tradelinks that exist between our two countries as we leave the EU.

“While in the US, I want to gain a better understanding of the USA's position on future trading arrangements with the UK and will press the case for developing a free trade agreement between our countries.

“Exciting opportunities for trade with North America lie ahead and, in my discussions with American businesses and politicians, I will reaffirm our commitment to boosting trade between Wales and the USA.

“As Wales and the UK prepare to leave the EU, I want to reassure investors and visitors from the United States that Wales remains an outward looking and welcoming country.”