

Our special relationship must boost trade and remove barriers – First Minister's message ahead of United States visit

Ahead of the visit, the First Minister is calling on the special relationship to be a vehicle for removing barriers and boosting trade between Wales and the USA.

With more than 250 American owned companies based in Wales, the United States is one of Wales' most important trading partners and accounted for almost 40 percent of all our inward investment projects last year.

Over the next four days, the First Minister will meet with companies looking to invest and expand in Wales and will discuss trade and business links with political representatives.

As part of the response to Brexit, the Welsh Government will be strengthening its network of trade and investment offices across the US. The Welsh Government currently has offices in Washington, New York, San Francisco, Atlanta and Chicago.

The First Minister will also host a St David's Day reception on Capitol Hill for key political figures and investors, and a reception in New York geared towards promoting the Welsh tourist industry.

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

“For Wales, the special relationship is about building on the strong cultural and trade links that already exist between our two countries.

“Wales has long been a destination of choice for many American businesses and we want to welcome even more in the future. Equally, Welsh businesses have been successful in selling to the United States across a range of sectors and I believe we can do even better in the future.

“In my discussions with American businesses, politicians and diplomats, I will be raising the importance of further developing free trade between our countries and the removal of barriers to make trade between us easier and quicker.

“We will also be committing additional resources to North America. We need a permanent presence in Canada, and a strengthened network here in the US. That is a priority for me over the next twelve months, as we restructure our activities overseas to take advantage

of new economic opportunities.”