

# *California Trade Delegation Travels to Cuba Next Week*

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Sacramento, March 27 (RHC) -- California State Assembly Speaker Toni Atkins, Democrat for the city of San Diego, will lead a trade delegation of California lawmakers, academics and members of the state's agricultural industry to Cuba next week, the speaker's office said on Thursday.

According to the news release, the trip aims to build relationships with Cuban policymakers, farmers and businesses and "to explore the various options for collaboration on matters of mutual benefit for California and Cuba."

Lawmakers will also discuss new opportunities for California businesses, including telecommunications, construction, and banking, which are opening due to developments in the U.S.-Cuba relationship, Atkins' office said.

"With the federal government moving forward with efforts to normalize diplomatic, economic, and commercial relations, it is important for California to also engage with Cuba and expand economic relationships that create new opportunities for businesses in our state," Atkins said in a statement. "The Assembly wants to do everything we can to create more jobs and business in California, and this trade delegation is one way to help California companies gain a competitive edge."

According to the UT San Diego journal, the group will partner with the nonprofit Californians Building Bridges, for its extensive knowledge of Cuba and many years leading cultural, humanitarian and entrepreneurial exchanges between California and Cuba.

Other legislative participants in the delegation are: Assembly members Luis Alejo, D-Salinas, Jim Cooper, D-Elk Grove, Adam Gray, D-Merced, Jose Medina, D-Riverside, Bill Quirk, D-Hayward, Rudy Salas, Jr., D-Bakersfield, and Tony Thurmond, D-Richmond.

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