

CONSENT

Bill No: ACR 210
Author: Jackson (D), et al.
Introduced: 5/21/26
Vote: 21

SENATE BUS., PROF. & ECON. DEV. COMMITTEE: 11-0, 6/29/26
AYES: Wahab, Choi, Archuleta, Arreguín, Caballero, Grayson, Menjivar, Niello,
Smallwood-Cuevas, Strickland, Umberg

SUBJECT: The Province of Gauteng in South Africa: sister state relationship

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This resolution expresses the intent of the Legislature to formalize a sister state relationship between the Province of Gauteng in South Africa and the State of California, encouraging the strengthening of existing partnerships, and would call upon California's universities, research institutions, and public agencies to explore new memoranda of understanding with Gauteng-based counterparts in areas of mutual interest.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) California currently has 36 official sister state, friendship state, and cooperation agreement relationships throughout the world that are administered through the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (Go-BIZ), which manages international trade development, small business assistance, and assistance with state government, amongst other provisions. California's Sister, Friendship and Cooperation relationships are intended to encourage mutually beneficial diplomatic, economic, educational, and cultural exchanges between a particular global region and California.

This resolution:

- 1) Recognizes that the province of Gauteng is South Africa's economic engine, generating approximately one-third of the nation's gross domestic product in 2025, and serving as a continental hub for finance, innovation, manufacturing, and trade.
- 2) Recognizes that Gauteng is home to around 15,000,000 residents, the highest income population in South Africa, and recorded more than 312.5 billion rand, or about \$18.6 billion, in new investment commitments in 2025 across sectors including information and communication technology, manufacturing, logistics, green energy, and property development.
- 3) Recognizes that California and Gauteng share complementary strengths in technology, clean energy, research, advanced manufacturing, and creative entertainment industries, and both regions anchor major universities, innovation centers, and globally connected economies.
- 4) Recognizes Gauteng's Special Economic Zones, data center capacity, and leadership in the African Continental Free Trade Area create unique opportunities for California companies and institutions to expand economic, educational, and scientific engagement with Africa.
- 5) Acknowledges that California State University, Sacramento has established a memorandum of understanding with the Province of Gauteng addressing shared social and academic priorities, demonstrating that the foundation for meaningful people-to-people and institution-to-institution collaboration between California and Gauteng is already underway.
- 6) Recognizes that Gauteng played a central role in South Africa's transition from apartheid and continues to advance internationally recognized work in truth and reconciliation, restorative justice, and community healing, offering valuable insight for California's pledge to equity and justice for all.
- 7) Acknowledges that both California and Gauteng are committed to sustainable development, climate resilience, workforce training, and building inclusive economies that reduce inequality and expand access to opportunity.
- 8) Invites the people and government of the Province of Gauteng in South Africa to enter into a sister state relationship with California focused on high-impact

cooperation in economic development, innovation, education, sustainability, and cultural exchange.

Background

According to Statistics South Africa, Gauteng is South Africa's largest provincial economy, contributing 33.2 percent of national GDP in 2024, despite being the country's smallest province by land area. The province includes Johannesburg, Tshwane/Pretoria, and Ekurhuleni, and functions as the country's core commercial, financial, industrial, and transportation hub.

According to the Gauteng Provincial Treasury, the province remains South Africa's "economic powerhouse," although it faces the same pressures affecting the national economy, including weak growth, fragile demand, and employment challenges. Its economy is driven heavily by finance, real estate, business services, trade, manufacturing, logistics, and government services.

According to the U.S. Department of State, South Africa remains an important investment destination with a diversified economy, while the World Bank describes the country as holding a significant regional "anchor" role in southern Africa. Within that broader national context, Gauteng's concentration of corporate headquarters, financial markets, infrastructure, skilled labor, and public institutions makes it central to South Africa's economic competitiveness and a key gateway for investment into the region.

A 2024 feature in *BestColleges* reported that California State University Sacramento (CSUS) President Dr. Luke Wood and Gauteng Provincial Legislature Speaker Morakane Mosupye signed a memorandum of understanding between the university and the Gauteng Provincial Legislature during the launch of CSUS' Black Honors College in August 2024. According to the publication, the MOU is intended to promote international academic, cultural, and scientific exchanges between Sacramento State and the Gauteng Province. *BestColleges* further reported it is intended to support future educational collaboration, including opportunities for South African students to participate in CSUS' Black Honors College and related academic programs.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: No Local: No

SUPPORT: (Verified 6/30/26)

None received

OPPOSITION: (Verified 6/30/26)

None received

Prepared by: Sarah Mason / B., P. & E.D. /
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