



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY
& ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

March 29, 2006

To the Mid-Atlantic Russia Business Council:

On behalf of the Office of International Business Development of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, I would like to express our support for the 4th and 5th Semi-Annual Russian-American Innovation Technology Weeks (RANIT) being hosted by the Mid-Atlantic-Russia Business Council. The 4th RANIT will be held from April 6-12, 2006 and the 5th RANIT, to be held from November 13-19, 2006.

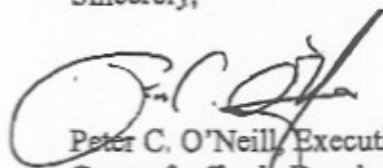
RANIT is the premier event in the Mid-Atlantic region dedicated to Russian-American technology cooperation and it has played a vital role in fostering trade relations between businesses in the Commonwealth and Russia since its inception in 2003. RANIT represents the culmination of more than 10 years of efforts and events hosted by the Council to encourage Russian-American technology cooperation. A number of companies who attended RANIT in previous years are now developing relationships with the Russian firms and organizations. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania strongly supports the ultimate goal of RANIT: To establish Pennsylvania and the Mid-Atlantic region as a major partner for Russian technology companies and a premier center of Russian-American technology cooperation.

The RANIT held in Philadelphia in June 2005 included a Russian delegation participating in the world's leading biotechnology exhibition, BIO-2005. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is pleased that the 4th RANIT and future RANITs held in the spring will focus on biotechnology and will bring a Russian biotechnology delegation to Philadelphia before traveling to the BIO exhibition. Russia has a highly qualified biotechnology workforce and an expertise in technology research that offers potential for collaboration in biotechnology between Pennsylvania and Russia.

Though the focus of the 4th RANIT is biotechnology, both the 4th and 5th RANITs will also highlight Russian capabilities in a number of other technology sectors. Also, both RANITs in 2006 will include events which highlight the long history of Russian-American cooperation and which celebrate the 300th anniversary of the birth of Benjamin Franklin, the first American member of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

The goal of the Office of International Business Development is to "Bring the World to Pennsylvania". In keeping with this goal, we are proud to support RANIT and we applaud the efforts of the Mid-Atlantic-Russia Business Council to foster commercial relations between the Commonwealth and Russia. .

Sincerely,



Peter C. O'Neill, Executive Director
Center for Trade Development
Office of International Business Development
Department of Community & Economic Development