

JOINT STATEMENT FROM THE 10TH U.S. –EU SME WORKSHOP IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE TRANSATLANTIC ECONOMIC COUNCIL

Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson and Arkansas First Lady Susan Hutchinson welcomed small business delegations from the United States and the European Union to the 10th U.S-EU Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Workshop, convened in Little Rock on September 18-19, 2019.

The SME Workshop was convened at the Arkansas Innovation Hub by the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, the Department of Commerce, and the Small Business Administration with the European Commission's Directorate General for Trade and Directorate General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, and members of the Industry Trade Advisory Committee for Small and Minority Business. The Arkansas Secretary of Commerce, Arkansas Economic Development Commission, World Trade Center Arkansas, and State of Arkansas Workforce Development Commission participated with 75 SME representatives from Europe and from the region and around the U.S.

Participants discussed U.S.-EU trade opportunities and challenges and exchanged best practices on a wide array of issues notably SME international strategies and rural economic development, SME participation in transatlantic supply chains, local SME workforce training for global competitiveness, and the relevance of innovation for SMEs in fields such as robotics and bioscience.

The U.S.-EU SME Workshop offers also the opportunity for small businesses from both sides of the Atlantic to engage directly and discuss trade topics of interest with U.S. and EU officials together with business associations. Amongst the follow up actions to the Workshop, parties agreed to explore the potential expansion of European Enterprise Network partners and entrepreneurial exchanges with Arkansas partners in the United States. The European Union will host the next EU-U.S. SME Workshop under the auspices of the Transatlantic Economic Council in 2020.