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MAYOR EMANUEL WELCOMES MAYOR DONAL LYONS OF GALWAY, IRELAND

Sister City Mayors Meet to Strengthen Partnership

Today Mayor Rahm Emanuel met with Mayor Donal Lyons of Galway, Ireland, a Chicago sister city since 1997. Galway and Chicago have developed a longstanding sister city relationship based on a shared vision of promoting arts, culture, business and education.

"As sister cities Chicago and Galway have maintained a strong relationship through mutual cooperation and our strong economic ties with Ireland," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "It is a pleasure to host Mayor Lyons and the delegation from Galway. Chicago and Ireland have a rich and intertwined history and hundreds of thousands of Chicagoans are proud of their Irish heritage. I welcome the opportunity to celebrate this warm relationship."

In their meeting today, Mayors Emanuel and Lyons discussed the commitment and close relationship shared by Chicago and Ireland. Mayor Emanuel has welcomed over 10 Irish government officials since taking office, including a visit from President of Ireland, Michael Higgins earlier this summer and Taoiseach Enda Kenny in March of 2012.

Since 1997, the City of Chicago has been sister cities with Galway, Ireland. The Galway committee, comprised of Chicagoans who maintain ties with the city, has hosted several high-level delegation visits, organized numerous cultural, educational and social service exchanges, and worked with their counterparts in Galway to help strengthen the connection between these two unique cities.

Chicago and Ireland continue to have robust cultural and economic ties. There are more than 25 Ireland-based companies in the Chicago area and 42 Chicago based-companies in Ireland, with total trade around \$814 million. The City of Chicago is also home to 730,000 residents with Irish ancestry, the second-largest Irish community in the United States.

Since taking office in 2011, Mayor Emanuel has committed to improving Chicago's international relationships, meeting with dignitaries from Britain, Germany, Mexico, India, China, Korea and Poland among many other nations.

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