



VOICE OF BUSINESS

NATO assembly will get glimpse of 'Main Street USA' in visit



Chris Kershner
Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce

Earlier this month, Dayton's Congressman Mike Turner, Gov. Mike DeWine, local government officials and business leaders gathered at the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce offices to announce the 2025 Spring Session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly will be held in Dayton. NATO PA's Spring Session hosted here will highlight the significant role that Dayton has and continues to play as an international peace agent and defense leader.

Chairman Mike Turner has always been a steadfast representative of the 10th Congressional District, but he is also leveraging his position with

NATO to bring the Assembly here. As the past president of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly and current Head of the US Delegation, Chairman Turner is in a position to help support NATO as they play an increasingly critical role in peace and protecting the political, economic and security interests of all of its 32 member nation. There is no better place for NATO and the world to carry out this mission, than in Dayton, Ohio in 2025.

Next year marks the 30th anniversary of the end of the war in Bosnia by the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords, which were negotiated at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in 1995. Hosting the 2025 NATO Parliament Assembly in Dayton will commemorate the Peace Accords' anniversary and put the eyes of the world again on our region.

The NATO Parliamentary



Gov. Mike DeWine, right along with Congressman Mike Turner announced Monday at the Dayton Chamber of Commerce offices that NATO will hold its spring parliamentary assembly in Dayton in May 2025.

JIM NOELKER/STAFF

Assembly has not been in the United States for over 20 years when it was last hosted in Orlando, Florida. Most recently the NATO spring sessions were held in Sofia, Bulgaria (2024), Luxembourg (2023), and Vilnius, Lithuania (2022).

When the NATO Parliamentary Assembly comes to Dayton over Memorial Day weekend next year, it will bring over 600 international dignitaries, their staff and families, US Department of State officials, media

and the attention of the world. The Dayton International Airport will receive travelers from around the globe; while local hotels, restaurants, entertainment venues and retail stores will see a welcome Memorial Day weekend economic influx.

There is also an intangible impact and experience that will occur when for the international visitors here in Dayton. While these NATO events have been held in larger cities in the past, hosting the NATO assembly in

Dayton will give participants insight and exposure to "Main Street USA" and the Midwestern values we live every day. NATO attendees will see and experience hardworking Dayton area businesses and people that are truly the heartbeat of America.

They will see localized impact of their decisions; they will experience a community that has redefined itself and is realizing a historic economic revival. Everything we do as a community and every experience they have, will be a story they will take home.

Dayton will again be at the center of international peace, diplomacy and economic growth. I'm proud, and not at all surprised, that our community continues to be on the international stage.

Chris Kershner is the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce CEO and President.

Bonnell

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a rapidly and unexpectedly changing place," she said.

"As long as we're able to keep doing and moving the needle, then I'm in," she said when asked about her continued place in the Air Force.

"When and if it becomes too hard, too hard to kind of make a difference, then it will become a really interesting question for me. But I haven't hit that point yet."

Though she travels a lot, she is based at Wright-Patterson, with her core team. Bonnell said she is struck by how much her researchers, scientists and specialists love living and working in the Dayton area.



Alexis Bonnell nears the first anniversary as CIO and director of the Digital Capabilities Directorate of AFRL. KEITH LEWIS / U.S. AIR FORCE

"I've never been anywhere where people want to leave less," she said.

\$32 million in grants have been distributed by the CareSource Foundation according to company CFO Larry Smart. PHOTOS BY MARSHALL GORBY / STAFF 2023



CareSource

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members and back to innovation, which helps us grow. We spent a lot of money on growth," Smart said.

Other states with CareSource include Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, North Carolina and West Virginia. CareSource also covers Medicaid members with complex behavioral health, developmental or intellectual disabilities in Arkansas.

"We are centered around our members, our communities, where we are entrenched," Smart said. "We are one of the largest pure Medicaid plans in the country."

When CareSource enters a new state, it typically hires about 115 new people in that state, he said. The company ends up supporting about 170 resources through the economic impact of jobs in the area, and an estimated \$34 million is added to the economy annually.

CareSource also brings some of its out-of-state employees to Dayton.

"This is our headquarters. So we travel in a lot. We have a lot of meetings. We have a lot of events. And we love to bring people into Dayton," Smart said.

When they have all-staff meetings, they fill up the Schuster Center. They have employees flying in for those and other events, Smart said. This boosts Dayton tourism and travel services.

But getting to Dayton isn't always easy.

"They're going to restaurants. They're staying in hotels. So the more we grow, the more people are going to start coming in here. And that's one of the asks



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is that we're going to need the transportation to get here," Smart said.

CareSource is hoping for more direct flights to Dayton International Airport. "If we create more flights, the more people will come," Smart said.

CareSource, over the last couple of years, has made bids to service Medicaid members in Mississippi, Kansas and Texas. The Kansas and Texas bids through the CareSource HealthAlliance and CareSource Bayou Health, respectively, did not receive the contracts sought, according to those states.

CareSource received notice from the Mississippi Division of Medicaid that it was an intended contract awardee to serve Medicaid members in Mississippi, but the company has not started serving members yet following an ongoing protest from another companies that had sought contract.

Earlier this year, CareSource announced a partnership to pursue serving Marketplace members in Wisconsin.

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Kettering

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messages seeking information.

The company's Kettering site is a 49,000 square-foot building on about 8.8 acres in the far northeast piece of the city, near Walnut Grove Country Club. City Planner Ryan Homs called the existing plant "a quiet operation. ... We don't anticipate any of those current conditions will change as a part of this request."

A conditional use for the expansion was approved by the Kettering Planning Commission on Monday night.

The business operates from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, and no other shifts are planned with the expansion's approval.

The Spaulding Road site was developed between 1956 and 1964 when about one-third of the current building was constructed, Kettering documents state. Since 1964, two major additions were built onto the

east side of the structure. Another addition was approved by the city in 2005, but was never built, according to city records.

Since the early 1980s, the only complaints and/or property maintenance violations include five violations that did not involve product manufacturing, city documents state.

"None of the ... issues are chronic and all appear to have been rectified in a timely manner," according to Kettering records.

Business expansion

Quaker Houghton wants to add 7,500 square feet at the business to produce a new product.



MANUFACTURING

'It is desolate': China's glut of unused car factories

Keith Bradsher

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CHONGQING, China — On the outskirts of Chongqing, western China's largest city, sits a huge symbol of the country's glut of car factories. It's a complex of gray buildings, nearly a square mile in size. The thousands of employees who used to work there have moved on. Its crimson loading docks are closed.

The facility, a former assembly plant and engine factory, had been a joint venture of a Chinese company and Hyundai, the South Korean giant. The complex opened in 2017 with robots and other equipment to make gasoline-powered cars. Hyundai sold the campus late last year for a fraction of the \$1.1 billion it took to build and equip it. Unmown grass at the site has grown knee high.

"It was all highly automated, but now, it is desolate," said Zhou Zhehui, 24, who works for a rival Chinese automaker, Chang'an, and whose apartment looks down on the former Hyundai complex.

China has more than 100 factories with the capacity to build close to 40 million internal combustion engine cars a year. That is roughly twice as many as people in China want to buy, and sales of these cars are dropping fast as electric vehicles become more popular.

In March, for the first time, sales of battery-electric and plug-in gasoline-electric hybrid cars together surpassed those of gasoline-powered cars in China's 35 large

est cities.

Dozens of gasoline-powered vehicle factories are barely running or have been mothballed.

The country's auto industry is near the start of an EV transition that is expected to last years and eventually claim many of those factories. How China manages that long change will influence its future economic growth, since the auto sector is so big and could transform its workforce.

The stakes are great for the rest of the world, too.

China, the world's largest car market, became the largest exporter last year, passing Japan and Germany. China's auto sales abroad are exploding.

Three-quarters of China's exported cars are gasoline-powered models that the domestic market no longer needs, said Bill Russo, an electric car consultant in Shanghai. Those exports threaten to flatten producers elsewhere.

At the same time, China's electric vehicle companies are still investing heavily in new factories.

Electric car sales in China are still growing. But the pace of growth has halved since last summer, as consumer spending has faltered in China because of a housing market crisis.

"There is a slowdown trend, especially for pure electric vehicles," said Cui Dongshu, secretary-general of the China Passenger Car Association.

China also has overcapacity in electric vehicle manu-

facturing, although less than for gasoline-powered cars. Price cutting for electric vehicles is common. Li Auto, a fast-growing Chinese manufacturer, reduced its prices in April. Tesla did the same. BYD, the industry leader in China, made cuts in February. Volkswagen and General Motors have also lowered EV prices in China this year. Automakers with factories close to China's coast are exporting gasoline-powered cars. But many of the endangered factories are in cities deep inside the country, like Chongqing, where high transport costs to the coast make it too expensive to export.

Almost all of China's electric cars are assembled at newly built factories, which qualify for subsidies from municipal governments and state-directed banks. It's cheaper for automakers to build new factories than to convert existing ones. The result has been enormous overcapacity.

"The Chinese auto industry is experiencing a revolution," said John Zeng, director of Asia forecasting at Global Data Automotive. "The old internal combustion capacity is dying."

Sales of gasoline-powered cars plummeted to 17.7 million last year from 28.3 million in 2017, the year that Hyundai opened its Chongqing complex. That drop is equivalent to the entire European Union car market last year, or all of the United States' annual car and light truck production.

Hyundai's sales in China have plunged 69% since 2017.

The company put the factory up for sale last summer, but no other automaker wanted it. Hyundai ended up selling the land, the buildings and much of the equipment back to a municipal development company in Chongqing for just \$224 million, or 20 cents on the dollar.

The municipal company said this year, while seeking insurance on the site, that it did not have a new tenant.

Chinese manufacturers, many of them partly or entirely owned by city governments, have been reluctant to reduce output and cut jobs.

Chang'an, a state-owned carmaker, has a factory just a 20-minute walk down pink-bougainvillea-lined lanes from the former Hyundai complex. The factory's many acres of parking were completely full of unsold cars on a visit in late April.

Cities that are particularly dependent on gasoline-powered car production, like Chongqing, face a jobs dilemma. Assembling electric vehicles requires considerably fewer workers than making gasoline-powered cars, because EVs have many fewer components.

Workers with strong technical backgrounds, particularly in robotics, can easily and quickly find jobs if they're laid off, autoworkers in Chongqing said in interviews. But semi-skilled workers — including those who are older and have not taken training courses to develop their abilities — are now finding it more difficult to obtain work.

Dayton

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Superior have complementary company cultures that are focused on building trust with customers through relationship-building and project selling, while using the

strength of teamwork to deliver excellent customer service," said Mark Carpenter, CEO of Dayton Superior.

Dayton Superior has more than 690 employees in 32 U.S. states and five countries.

Carpenter will continue to lead Dayton Superior, reporting to Scott Riggs, chief oper-

ating officer, White Cap said.

Dayton Superior provides products used in the non-residential, concrete construction market.

The company emerged from bankruptcy protection in 2009 and 2010. Then based in Washington Twp., the company, which was

once publicly traded, had about 140 employees locally and about 1,200 nationally at that time.

The business was founded in 1924 as the family-owned Dayton Sure Grip & Shore Co. It had a busy decade in the 1990s, acquiring 16 companies.