



CONSULATE OF PANAMA
HOUSTON, TEXAS

January 2019

The Consulate of Panama in Houston wishes you a very successful 2019!

2019 is already underway. A New Year is an appropriate time for reflection. We try to see what went wrong and right in 2018 and how could we have made it a more successful year. The experiences of last year will have an impact on our expectations of 2019.

As we look into last year, we feel that the Consulate of Panama in Houston advanced in many fronts. It was our first full year in the new office that made it more comfortable and pleasing to our visitors. We continue to promote the "Texas-Panama: Strategic Partnership" and we're honored to have the visit of Panama's Minister of Maritime Affairs during "Panama Week Texas 2018" that took place in Houston at the end of November. We are grateful for the support we received from the Texas community.

Last year was an excellent year for the Panama Canal and its relationship with Texas. The expansion of the canal continues to bring positive results for the waterway and the country. Its impact in Texas has been dramatic. Last year the canal expanded the capacity for LNG ships, making this U.S. export one of the mainstays of the canal. As more LNG terminals are built along the Texas coast, the strategic partnership will be strengthened.

Progress was made in the maritime sector. 2019 was the first year of Segumar Houston, the technical office of the Panama Maritime Authority, an important presence to provide advice to the Panama Ship Registry on offshore activities, in a region that is extremely important to the maritime and energy relationship between Texas and Panama. As such, the consulate organized a maritime forum that explained among others, new technologies being used by the register. Also, the consulate organized trade & investment missions to and from Panama. New regions such as San Antonio and Prairie View, who had not participated in these initiatives before, have showed interest and were part of the initiatives.

Panama will be having presidential elections in May 2019. Different from other countries in which economic models are part of the election debate, in the case of Panama the leading candidates favor the present economic framework. This provides stability and assurances to corporations working and looking to invest in Panama. This is important because as a crossroads and one of the pre-eminent trade corridors in the world connecting with 144 trade routes, 160 countries, and 1700 ports, Panama has a global responsibility to provide access and connectivity, trademarks of a global country.

As we continue to strengthen the Strategic Partnership between Texas and Panama, we avail ourselves of the opportunity to thank you for your support in 2018 and wish you a very successful 2019!

Best Personal Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Juan B. Sosa'.

Amb. Juan B. Sosa
Consul General of Panama