

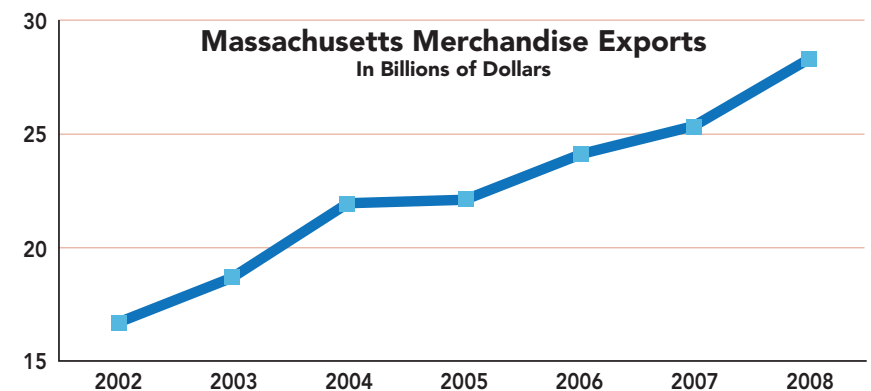
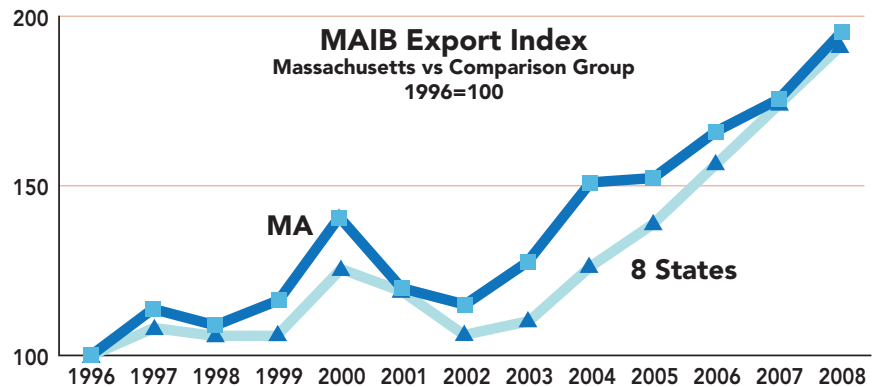
# 2008 State Export Set Record for Sixth Year in a Row

Massachusetts merchandise exports set a new record in 2008 for the sixth consecutive year, rising 11.6% to \$28.3 billion. Most of the gains came in the first part of the year, before a strengthening dollar and a weakening global economy put a damper on growth. The state's annual export growth was similar to the nation's (11.8%). The Massachusetts Alliance for International Business's Export Index, which compares the Bay State's export performance to a comparison group of eight states, saw Massachusetts slightly increase its narrow edge in 2008: the Commonwealth's exports were 195% of their 1996 level, compared to 191% for the group of competitors.

Instruments were the state's leading export industry for a fourth straight year at \$5.6 billion, a gain of 9.7%; the sector's overseas sales have more than doubled in the past decade. Electric machinery followed at \$4.8 billion, up 5%, with industrial machinery (\$4.2 billion) close behind despite a 2% decline, and pharmaceutical products (up 11.9%) reaching \$3 billion for the first time. These four sectors accounted for more than five-eight of the state's merchandise exports in 2008. Precious metals made the largest gains, with vehicles and parts and arms and ammunition, among other industries, also increasing sales significantly.

The largest foreign markets for Massachusetts products in 2008 were Canada (\$3.8 billion), the United Kingdom (\$3.5 b.), the Netherlands (\$2.7 b.), Germany (\$2.5 b.), and Japan (\$2.4 b.) – the perennial leaders accounting for more than half of Bay State exports. China, Mexico, France, Taiwan, and Korea followed. “The diversification of Massachusetts export efforts is highlighted by the fact that our top 10 markets include our two NAFTA partners, four members of the European Union, and four Asian nations,” said Kristin Rupert, executive director of the Massachusetts Alliance for International Business.

The state's string of annual export



records is likely to end in 2009, as most of the world's major economies battle recession.

*Export figures are prepared by the World*

*Institute for Social and Economic Research (WISER) at Holyoke Community College. The MAIB Export Index is produced by AIM Research. ❖*



Neil LeBlanc, Canada's consul-general in Boston, spoke to the Massachusetts Alliance for International Business board in February. He was accompanied by Marie-Louise Hannan, consul and senior trade commissioner.