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(DES MOINES) – The year 2013 marks the 30th Anniversary of the Hebei Province, PRC and State of Iowa Sister State relationship. During those 30 years, Iowa and Hebei have participated in many projects. Throughout 2013 there will be events statewide that will be held to commemorate this important relationship.

On February 11th, there will be events that will include a small group performance of Hebei and Iowa youth in the chambers of the Iowa House of Representatives. Also attending the performance will be six officials from Hebei Province. On Monday evening, the 11th, from 6-7pm at Valley High School the Shijiazhuang Foreign Language School Orchestra (from Hebei) will perform a joint concert with Valley High School's Orchestra. This event is free and open to the public.

International relationship building is the cornerstone of the work Iowa Sister States does. The Hebei/Iowa relationship has received much attention due to the fact that in 1985 Xi Jinping came to Iowa from Hebei on an agricultural tour through Iowa Sister States. Xi Jinping will become President of China in 2013 and has made it very clear that he is fond of Iowa and its citizens, even visiting the State of Iowa in February, 2012.

In recognition of this relationship, Governor Branstad sent a New Year greeting to Governor Zhang Qingwei and citizens of Hebei, China. In return, attached is the letter of greeting from Hebei Governor Zhang to the citizens of Iowa.

Iowa Sister States (ISS) is a non-profit, volunteer-driven organization that was founded in 1985 to manage the official relationships the State of Iowa has with 8 different countries. To learn more about the Iowa/Hebei sister state relationship, or to view a list of its activities, please visit the Iowa Sister State website www.iowasisterstates.org.

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