



Wes Moore | Governor
Aruna Miller | Lt. Governor
Kevin A. Anderson | Secretary of Commerce
Signe Pringle | Deputy Secretary of Commerce

DATE: March 26, 2024
BILL NO: House Bill 1206
BILL TITLE: Maryland-Ireland Trade Commission – Establishment
COMMITTEE: Senate Finance
POSITION: Support

The Maryland Department of Commerce (Commerce) supports House Bill 1206 - Maryland-Ireland Trade Commission - Establishment.

Bill Summary:

As amended, House Bill 1206 establishes the Maryland-Ireland Trade Commission within Commerce to study and make recommendations regarding the promotion of trade between Maryland and Ireland. The Commission is required to submit its recommendations by December 1, 2025. The Commission is scheduled to sunset after September 2026.

Background:

Recognizing the number of Marylanders with Irish heritage and the ties between our State and Ireland, this legislation seeks to formalize and improve upon the relationship. Through the study of trade, policy, business, academic and other issues the Commission will make recommendations to promote trade between Maryland and Ireland.

Rationale:

Commerce through its Office of International Investment and Trade (OIIT) seeks to support Maryland businesses and grow the State’s economy by assisting Maryland firms in exporting their products and services to international markets. OIIT also helps these businesses effectively initiate or expand their overseas marketing. Despite the strong connections between Maryland and Ireland, Ireland is not even among the State’s top 30 export markets, demonstrating the potential room for growth. In successfully implementing the recommendations of the Commission, Commerce OIIT will be able to increase potential benefits to the Maryland companies they assist.

Commerce would like to thank the sponsor for his leadership in this area and for working with the Department on this legislation. The Department supports the amendments added in the House that sunset the Commission after two years.

Commerce respectfully requests a favorable report on House Bill 1206.