

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2024 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 1206

(Delegate Kerr, *et al.*)

Health and Government Operations

Finance

Maryland-Ireland Trade Commission - Establishment

This bill establishes a Maryland-Ireland Trade Commission within the Department of Commerce to study and promote trade between Maryland and Ireland. The commission must study and make recommendations regarding (1) advancing bilateral trade and investment between Maryland and Ireland; (2) initiating joint action on policy issues of mutual interest to Maryland and Ireland; (3) promoting business and academic exchanges between Maryland and Ireland; (4) encouraging mutual economic support between Maryland and Ireland; (5) encouraging mutual investment in the infrastructure of Maryland and Ireland; and (6) other issues as determined by the commission. The commission must report its findings to the General Assembly and the Governor by December 1, 2025. **The bill terminates September 30, 2026.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Commerce can support the commission with existing budgeted resources. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The bill provides for the membership of, and appointment of members to, the commission. A member of the commission may not receive compensation as a member of the commission but is entitled to reimbursement for expenses, as specified.

Current Law:

Office of International Trade

Commerce's Office of International Trade promotes the development of international business activities and opportunities in the State. The office is generally charged with encouraging businesses in the State to increase international trade activities, with special emphasis on exports; encouraging and facilitating participation by businesses in the State in barter, counter trade, and joint venture transactions; and coordinating with other federal, State, and local units and private organizations.

Governor's Subcabinet for International Affairs

Executive Order 01.01.2001.20, as amended by Executive Order 01.01.2005.24, established the Governor's Subcabinet for International Affairs, to advise the Governor on matters of international affairs, coordinate State international activity, and oversee the protocol functions of the State. The subcabinet consists of the Secretary of State (who serves as chair), the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of Higher Education, the Secretary of the Environment, and the Lieutenant Governor.

Maryland Sister States Program

The Maryland Sister States Program, established in 1980, operates in partnership with the Sister States of Maryland, a private, nonprofit corporation, to oversee and promote international exchanges. According to the Secretary of State's Office – the lead agency responsible for the maintenance and development of the program – the program includes 20 relationships in 17 countries, including County Cork, Ireland, as of 2013.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Commerce; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 8, 2024
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