

Ireland Trade Commission

The Ireland Trade Commission legislation was drafted by a member of the New Jersey American Irish State Legislators Caucus following their trip to Ireland in 2022. The members of the Caucus asked after their visit to Belfast how they could help support the peace process and the Good Friday Agreement and this legislation was the result of their discussions.

This is an all-island commission, encompassing both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. It can play a pivotal role in sustaining the Good Friday Peace Agreement, which was only made possible with the continued support of both U.S. state and federal legislators, and successive U.S. Presidents and their administrations.

Ireland serves as a strategic gateway to the European Union for U.S. States, offering access to a single market of approximately 500 million people across 27 member states. More than 1000 global companies have chosen to base their operations in Ireland to access into this market. As Northern Ireland is part of the UK, this arrangement also enables U.S. states to access to both the UK and EU markets simultaneously, an important advantage in today's global economy. The Republic of Ireland has direct access to the EU market, there are 950 US companies based in Ireland using it as a gateway to the EU. Ireland is also the 6th largest investor in the US, the Ireland Trade Commission is intended to build on this two-way relationship.

With this Commission they are helping communities in Ireland but also helping communities in their own State through the creation of educational, economic, governmental and people to people links. The legislation can be adopted as it is or amended to work best in each State.

The key elements of the commission include:

- There is no cost to the taxpayer in each State as the Commission raises the funds to do its work to visit Ireland and host visiting Irish Delegations
- People may be appointed by the Governor, the Senate President, Speaker/ Majority Leader, and Minority Leader.
- Members can be appointed by the Chambers of Commerce in the State or an equivalent organisation and by the Universities or its representative Association.
- The remaining open places on the commission could be drawn from the retired members of the State or federal Legislator so that institutional knowledge is retained. Leaders of the business in the State with an interest in Ireland could also be appointed to the open commission places.
- The members can range from 9 as is the case with West Virginia or up to 23 as is the case with New Jersey.

25 US States Houses passed the Ireland Trade Commission legislation so far, with 20 more states with bills published. Nevada and Vermont Ireland Trade Commissions were passed and signed into law by their respective Governors.

The Ireland Trade Commission Legislation will see the appointment of 301 commissioners across the 25 States that have passed the legislation, with 219 of those appointments already filled and 82 appointments to be made by Governors, Senate Presidents, and House Speakers as well as other leaders, agencies and departments in the States.

States with Established Ireland Trade Commissions

Alabama	Arizona
Connecticut	Delaware
Indiana	Kentucky
Louisiana	Maine
Maryland	Massachusetts
Montana	Nevada
New Hampshire	New Jersey
Oklahoma	Ohio
Oregon	Pennsylvania
Rhode Island	South Carolina
South Dakota	Tennessee
Vermont	West Virginia
Wisconsin	

Bills Published or Being Published:

Colorado	California
Georgia	Hawaii
Illinois	Iowa
Kansas	Missouri
Minnesota	Michigan
Mississippi	Nebraska
New Mexico	New York
North Dakota	Texas
Utah	Virginia
Wyoming	Washington

Members of the Ireland Trade Commission

301 plus Ireland Trade Commission members are appointed under the legislation by the Governor, Senate President, and House Speaker, among others including the Secretary of Commerce in many states. Those who have been appointed so far include;

- U.S. Senator (1981-2011) Christopher Dodd (Connecticut Ireland Trade Commission)
- US Congressman (1993-2002) Marty Meehan (Massachusetts Ireland Trade Commission)
- Ambassador Claire Cronin (Massachusetts Ireland Trade Commissioner)
- Secretary of Commerce, Ellen McNair (Alabama Ireland Trade Commission)
- Senate President Pro Tempore, Beth Mizell (Louisiana Ireland Trade Commissioner)
- House Speaker, Sherman A. Packard (New Hampshire Ireland Trade Commissioner)
- President Diageo North America, Laura Merritt (Maryland Ireland Trade Commissioner)
- CEO of New Jersey Economic Development Authority, Tim Sullivan (New Jersey Ireland Trade Commissioner)
- Director of International Relations and Global Commerce, Oklahoma Department of Commerce, Sarah Short (Oklahoma Ireland Trade Commissioner)
- Vice President of Player Personnel, Pittsburgh Steelers, Dan Rooney Jr (Pennsylvania Ireland Trade Commissioner)
- Secretary of Agriculture, South Dakota, Hunter Roberts (South Dakota, Ireland Trade Commissioner)
- Commissioner of Commerce and Insurance, Tennessee, Carter Lawrence (Tennessee Ireland Trade Commissioner)
- House Speaker, Delegate Roger Hanshaw (West Virginia Ireland Trade Commissioner)
- Present Pro Tempore, Senator Patrick Testin (Wisconsin Ireland Trade Commissioner)