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H.B. 455*
135th General Assembly

Bill Analysis

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Version: As Reported by House Government Oversight

Primary Sponsors: Reps. Patton and Manning

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SUMMARY

- Creates the Ohio Ireland Trade Commission, which must study certain economic and policy issues and potential business and academic exchanges.
- Specifies that the Commission consists of nine members, with three members appointed from each chamber of the General Assembly and three members appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate.
- Sets out procedures for the internal operations of the Commission.
- Requires the Commission to issue annual reports of its activities and any findings and recommendations.
- Allows the Commission to fundraise and to accept gifts from private and public entities.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Ohio Ireland Trade Commission

The bill creates the Ohio Ireland Trade Commission, which must study potential means of advancing the following between Ohio and Ireland:

- Bilateral trade and investment;
- Policy issues of mutual interest;
- Business and academic exchanges;

* This analysis was prepared before the report of the House Government Oversight Committee appeared in the House Journal. Note that the legislative history may be incomplete.

- Mutual economic support;
- Mutual investment in infrastructure;
- Other issues as determined by the Commission.¹

Members and procedures

The Commission consists of the following nine members:

- Six members of the General Assembly – three senators appointed by the Senate President and three representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House – who have knowledge of, or current or past involvement in, organizations that promote Irish affairs, or have interest in the wellbeing of trade relations between Ohio and Ireland;
- Three members appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate, as follows:
 - One member who represents a state institution of higher education;
 - One member who represents the Ohio Chamber of Commerce or a successor organization that advances business interests in Ohio;
 - One member who represents Irish American communities or interest in Ohio.

The bill requires that members be appointed within 90 days after the bill takes effect. Legislative members must serve terms of two years or for the remainder of the legislator's term, whichever is shorter. Members appointed by the Governor must serve terms of four years. Any vacancy is to be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

The Commission must elect a chairperson from among its members. A majority of the members of the Commission constitutes a quorum to do business. The chairperson may create subcommittees and appoint Commission members as subcommittee chairpersons, at the discretion of the Commission chairperson. Members of the Commission must serve without compensation, but they may be reimbursed for expenses actually incurred in the performance of their duties, within the limits of available funds.²

Activities

The bill requires the Commission to meet and hold hearings at the places it designates throughout the state. Not later than 15 months after the bill takes effect (one year after the members must be appointed), and annually thereafter, the Commission must file a report with the Governor, the Senate President, and the Speaker of the House. The report must discuss the Commission's activities during the past year and any associated findings and recommendations.

¹ R.C. 149.60(A).

² R.C. 149.60(B) through (E).

Under the bill, the Commission may raise funds through direct solicitation or other fundraising events independently or with other groups. And, it may accept gifts, grants, and bequests from individuals, corporations, foundations, governmental agencies, and public and private organizations and institutions. All funds must be deposited in the Ohio Ireland Trade Commission Fund, which the bill creates in the state treasury. The Commission must use the fund to defray its administrative expenses and to carry out its purposes under the bill.³

HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	03-27-24
Reported, H. Government Oversight	--

ANHB0455RH-135/sb

³ R.C. 149.60(F) and (G).