

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION-2024

Legislative Document

No. 2164

S.P. 919

In Senate, January 11, 2024

An Act to Establish the Maine-Ireland Trade Commission and Improve Collaboration with Ireland

Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 203.

Reference to the Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Grant'.

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator STEWART of Aroostook.
Cosponsored by Representative TERRY of Gorham.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 3 MRSA c. 39** is enacted to read:

3 **CHAPTER 39**

4 **MAINE-IRELAND TRADE COMMISSION**

5 **§1031. Commission established**

6 The Maine-Ireland Trade Commission, referred to in this chapter as “the commission,”
7 is established by Title 5, section 12004-K, subsection 10-A to promote cooperation
8 between this State and the country of Ireland.

9 **§1032. Membership; terms**

10 **1. Membership.** The commission consists of 9 members appointed as follows:

11 A. Two members of the Senate, appointed by the President of the Senate, including
12 one member of the party holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature and one
13 member of the party holding the 2nd largest number of seats in the Legislature;

14 B. Two members of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the
15 House of Representatives, including one member of the party holding the largest
16 number of seats in the Legislature and one member of the party holding the 2nd largest
17 number of seats in the Legislature; and

18 C. The following 5 members, appointed by the Governor:

19 (1) A representative of a public institution of higher education;

20 (2) A representative of a statewide chamber of commerce;

21 (3) Two members representing Irish-American communities, organizations or
22 interests; and

23 (4) One member of the public.

24 In making the appointments under this subsection, the appointing authorities shall, to the
25 greatest extent possible, consider and appoint individuals with knowledge of or current or
26 past involvement in organizations that promote Irish or Irish-American affairs.

27 **2. Terms.** Legislative members of the commission serve during the term of office for
28 which they were elected. The members of the commission appointed pursuant to
29 subsection 1, paragraph C serve 4-year terms.

30 **§1033. Vacancies**

31 A member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring prior to the expiration of the term for
32 which the member’s predecessor was appointed serves only for the remainder of that term.
33 The vacancy must be filled in the same manner as the original appointment was made.

34 **§1034. Chair**

35 The commission shall elect a chair from among its members. The chair may appoint
36 from among the commission members subcommittees and subcommittee chairs at the
37 chair’s discretion.

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§1035. Quorum

A majority of the members of the commission constitutes a quorum and a quorum is required for the transaction of the business of the commission.

§1036. Duties

The commission shall work to advance bilateral trade and investment between Maine and Ireland; initiate joint action of policy issues of mutual interest to Maine and Ireland; promote business and academic exchanges between Maine and Ireland; encourage mutual economic support between Maine and Ireland; encourage mutual investment in the infrastructure of Maine and Ireland; and address other issues as determined by the commission.

§1037. Report

The commission shall submit a report to the Governor and the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over innovation, development, economic advancement and business matters by February 1, 2025 and annually thereafter regarding the activities of the commission during the preceding calendar year. The report must include recommendations as determined appropriate by the commission to effectuate its purpose.

§1038. Funds

The commission may raise funds, through direct solicitation or other fundraising methods, alone or with other groups, and accept gifts, grants and bequests from individuals, corporations, foundations, governmental agencies and public and private organizations and institutions. The commission may expend those funds for purposes consistent with this chapter.

Sec. 2. 5 MRSA §12004-K, first ¶, as enacted by PL 1987, c. 786, §5, is amended to read:

The primary responsibility of intergovernmental organizations is to establish cooperation between this State and other states or Canadian provinces or other countries.

Sec. 3. 5 MRSA §12004-K, sub-§10-A is enacted to read:

10-A.

<u>State</u>	<u>Maine-Ireland Trade Commission</u>	<u>Expenses Only</u>	<u>3 MRSA</u>
<u>Government</u>			<u>§1031</u>

Sec. 4. Staggered terms; Maine-Ireland Trade Commission. Notwithstanding the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 3, section 1032, subsection 2, of the members initially appointed to the Maine-Ireland Trade Commission by the Governor pursuant to Title 3, section 1032, subsection 1, paragraph C, the Governor shall designate the first 2 appointments for 3-year terms and the remaining appointments for 4-year terms.

SUMMARY

This bill establishes the Maine-Ireland Trade Commission to promote cooperation between Maine and Ireland.