



Senate Fiscal Agency
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Senate Bill 128 (as introduced 3-6-25)
Sponsor: Senator Sean McCann
Committee: Economic and Community Development

Date Completed: 10-29-25

CONTENT

The bill would enact a new law to do the following:

- **Create the Michigan-Ireland Trade Commission (Commission) within the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC).**
- **Prescribe the Commission's membership and duties, including promoting business and academic exchanges between Michigan and Ireland.**
- **Create the Michigan-Ireland Trade Commission Fund (Fund).**

Commission Members

Specifically, the Commission would have to consist of the following members:

- A representative of a public institution of higher education in the State.
- A representative of the Chamber of Commerce.
- Three members who represented Irish American communities or the interests of Irish American communities.
- Two members, one selected from a list submitted by the Senate Majority Leader and one selected from a list submitted by the Senate Minority Leader; each list would have to include at least two individuals who either 1) had knowledge of or had current or past involvement in organizations that promoted Irish affairs or 2) had interest in the well-being of trade relations between the State and Ireland.
- Two members, one selected from a list submitted by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and one selected from a list submitted by the House Minority Leader; each list would have to meet the criteria described above.

The bill would require the Governor to appoint the first members of the Commission within 90 days of the bill's effective date.

A member would serve on the Commission for two years or until a successor was appointed, whichever was later. If a vacancy occurred on the Commission, the Governor would have to appoint an individual to fill the vacancy for the balance of the term. The bill would allow the Governor to remove a member of the Commission for incompetence, dereliction of duty, malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance in office, or any other good cause.

The Governor would have to call the first meeting of the Commission. At the first meeting, the Commission would have to elect a member as chairperson. It also could elect other officers that it considered necessary or appropriate. The bill would require the Commission to meet at least quarterly, or more frequently at the call of the chairperson or at the request of at least five members.

A majority of the members of the Commission would constitute a quorum for transacting business. A vote in favor by a majority of the members of the Commission would be necessary to undertake any action.

A member of the Commission would not be entitled to compensation for service on the Commission; however, the Commission could reimburse a member for actual and necessary expenses incurred in serving.

Commission Duties

The bill would require the Commission to do the following:

- Advance bilateral trade and investment between Michigan and Ireland.
- Initiate joint action on policy issues of mutual interest to Michigan and Ireland.
- Promote business and academic exchanges between Michigan and Ireland.
- Encourage mutual economic support between Michigan and Ireland.
- Encourage mutual investment in the infrastructure of Michigan and Ireland.
- Address any other issues the Commission determined.

Beginning February 1, 2026, and by February 1 each following year, the Commission would have to report any findings and results collected in the immediately previous year to the Governor and the Legislature.

The bill would require the Commission to conduct its business in compliance with the Open Meetings Act. A writing prepared, owned, used, possessed, or retained by the Commission in performing an official function would be subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

Commission Funding

The bill would authorize the Commission to raise funds, through direct solicitation or other fundraising events, alone or with other groups, and accept gifts, grants, and bequests from individuals, corporations, foundations, governmental agencies, public and private organizations, and institutions to minimize the Commission's administrative expenses and to carry out its purposes. The Commission would have to report on its publicly accessible website the receipt and details of any gifts, grants, or bequests.

Additionally, the bill would create the Fund within the State Treasury. The State Treasurer would have to deposit any funds, gifts, grants, and bequests received into the Fund. The State Treasurer also would have to direct the investment of money in the Fund and credit interest and earnings from the investments to the Fund.

The Department of Treasury would be the administrator of the Fund for auditing purposes. Money in the Fund at the close of the fiscal year would not lapse to the General Fund. The Department of Treasury would have to spend money from the Fund on an annual basis upon appropriation only to minimize the Commission's administrative expenses and to enable the Commission to carry out its purposes.

PREVIOUS LEGISLATION

(This section does not provide a comprehensive account of previous legislative efforts on this subject matter.)

The bill is similar to Senate Bill 1024 of the 2023-2024 Legislative Session, which passed the Senate but received no further action in the House.

BACKGROUND

In March 2025, Governor Gretchen Whitmer visited the United Kingdom and Ireland to promote international trade and investment in the State. Chief Executive Officer of the MEDC Quentin Messer, Jr., Michigan Department of Agriculture Director Dr. Tim Boring, and Michigan Department of Natural Resources Director Scott Bowen also attended. According to the Governor's Office, since January 2019, Ireland made \$101.0 million capital investments in Michigan, creating 292 jobs.¹

Legislative Analyst: Abby Schneider

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have an indeterminate fiscal impact on the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity and no fiscal impact on local units of government. Generally, commissions cost between \$150,000 and \$400,000, depending on the number of staff needed to support the commission, the commission's activities, and travel expenses. Commissions can be supported with existing funds within the host department or through direct appropriations. The proposed Commission's expenses could be offset from the Fund with private dollars. The final costs to support the Commission is currently unknown, in addition to whether any private funds would be raised through the Fund to offset any of those expenses.

The bill would not have a significant fiscal impact on the Department of Treasury. Existing appropriations would be sufficient to establish and direct the investment of the new Fund. If the average daily balance of the Fund were to regularly exceed \$1.0 million, minor administrative costs could be incurred. This would depend upon the total amount appropriated to the Fund. The bill does not appropriate any funds.

Fiscal Analyst: Elizabeth Raczkowski
Cory Savino, PhD

¹ Executive Office of the Governor, *Gov. Whitmer & Michigan Delegation Embarks on Investment Mission to the UK and Ireland to Strengthen Economic and Tourism Ties*, March 23, 2025.

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.