Senate Fiscal Agency
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BILL ANALYSIS

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Senate Bill 1024 (as introduced 10-20-24) *(Senate-passed version)*
Sponsor: Senator Sean McCann
Committee: Economic and Community Development

Date Completed: 12-11-24

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 and 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 a 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, 2025, 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.

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.

Legislative Analyst: Abby Schneider

FISCAL IMPACT

The bills would have an indeterminate fiscal impact on the State and no fiscal impact on local units of government. The Michigan Strategic Fund would incur the costs for staff or support provided to the Commission. Members of the Commission would serve without compensation: however, they could be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses incurred while serving.

The typical annual costs to support a commission can range from $10,000 to $300,000, depending on the travel expenses and staff demands. It is likely that these costs could be absorbed within existing appropriations. The bill also would allow the Commission to raise funds, which could be used to support the expenses of the Commission.

The bill would not have a significant fiscal impact on the Department of Treasury. Although the amount raised, donated, or otherwise collected for deposit into the new Fund cannot be estimated at this time, it is likely that the average balance of the Fund would not exceed $1.0 million in the first years of the Commission's operations. Ongoing costs to the Department of Treasury of administration and investment of the Fund would be less than $100. Current appropriations would be sufficient to carry out the required activities.

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