Session of 2025

HOUSE BILL No. 2344

By Committee on Commerce, Labor and Economic Development

Requested by Representative Tarwater

2-7

AN ACT concerning economic development; relating to international trade; establishing the Kansas-Ireland trade commission to advance, promote and encourage business and other mutually beneficial activities between Kansas and Ireland; creating the Kansas-Ireland trade commission fund.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas:

Section 1. (a) There is hereby established the Kansas-Ireland trade commission. The commission shall consist of 13 members as follows:

(1) The chairperson of the senate standing committee on commerce and the chairperson of the house of representatives standing committee on commerce, labor and economic development, as appointed by the president of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives, respectively;

(2) two members of the senate, one of whom shall be appointed by the president of the senate and one of whom shall be appointed by the minority leader of the senate. The appointees shall have interest in the well-being of trade relations between Kansas and Ireland and current or past involvement in businesses engaged in international trade, preferably with Ireland, or organizations that promote international trade or Irish affairs; and

(3) two members of the house of representatives, one of whom shall be appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives and one of whom shall be appointed by the minority leader of the house of representatives. The appointees shall have interest in the well-being of trade relations between Kansas and Ireland and current or past involvement in businesses engaged in international trade, preferably with Ireland, or organizations that promote international trade or Irish affairs;

(4) six members, two of whom shall be selected by the governor, two by the speaker of the house of representatives and two by the president of the senate. The two members selected by the governor, speaker of the house of representatives and president of the senate, respectively, shall each be a representative of either:

(A) A Kansas postsecondary public education institution;

(B) the Irish American community in Kansas who is interested in

furthering trade between Kansas and Ireland;

(C) a Kansas industry engaged in or seeking to engage in trade with Ireland; or

(D) a Kansas business association, trade organization, economic development organization or chamber of commerce currently engaged in or interested in engaging in the furtherance of trade with Ireland; and

(5) the secretary of commerce or the secretary's designee who has responsibilities with respect to international trade.

(b) No public postsecondary educational institution, industry, business association, trade organization or chamber of commerce shall have more than one representative serving as a member of the commission. Not more than two representatives of the Kansas Irish community shall serve on the commission and, if more than one such representative is appointed to serve, such representatives shall not be members of the same political party.

(c) (1) Legislative members shall serve for a term corresponding to the two-year biennial legislative session in which they are appointed to the council and remain members of the legislature to retain membership on the council. Vacancies of legislative members shall be filled for the unexpired portion of the term in the same manner as the original appointment. The appointing authority for a legislative member may remove a member and substitute such member with another appointee at any time. Legislative members may be reappointed.

(2) All nonlegislative members shall serve a term of three years. Vacancies of nonlegislative members shall be filled for the unexpired portion of the term in the same manner as the original appointment. The appointing authority for the nonlegislative member may remove a member and substitute such member with another appointee at any time. Nonlegislative members may be reappointed.

(d) Members of the commission attending meetings of such commission or attending a subcommittee meeting thereof authorized by such commission shall be paid compensation, subsistence allowances, mileage and other expenses as provided in K.S.A. 75-3223, and amendments thereto, for each day or part thereof in which such member attended a meeting authorized by the commission. Members shall be reimbursed for other necessary and reasonable expenses actually incurred in the performance of the member's official duties. A members' compensation and expenses incurred from the attendance at meetings of the commission and any administrative expenses of the commission shall be paid from any account of the state general fund of the department of commerce as designated by the secretary of commerce.

(e) The commission shall hold meetings at least once each quarter. Meetings shall be held in Topeka, Kansas, and at the call of the

chairperson.

(f) A majority of the members of the commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business of the commission.

(g) The chairperson of the house of representatives standing committee on commerce, labor and economic development shall serve as the chairperson of the council when first organized and for the ensuing two years. The chairperson of the senate standing committee on commerce shall serve as the chairperson of the council for the next succeeding two years, and thereafter, the office of chairperson shall continue to alternate between the chambers.

(h) The chairperson may appoint from among the commission members subcommittees and subcommittee chairpersons.

(i) The commission shall keep records of all proceedings, which shall be public and open to inspection.

(j) The staff of the office of revisor of statutes, the legislative research department and the division of legislative administrative services shall provide such assistance as may be requested by the chairperson.

Sec. 2. (a) The purpose of the Kansas-Ireland trade commission shall be to advance, promote and encourage business and other mutually beneficial activities between Kansas and Ireland, including:

(1) Bilateral trade and investment;

(2) joint action on policy issues of mutual interest;

(3) business and academic exchanges;

(4) mutual economic support;

(5) mutual investment in respective infrastructure; and

(6) other opportunities for mutual benefit and economic growth as identified by the commission.

(b) The commission shall report findings, activities, results and recommendations concerning subsection (a) to the governor and the legislature within one year of the commission's initial meeting and by February 1 of each succeeding year for the activities of the preceding calendar year. The report shall be in writing and may include recommendations or proposed legislation as deemed appropriate by the commission to effectuate the commission's purpose.

(c) The Kansas-Ireland trade commission shall be authorized to raise funds to carry out the purposes of the commission. Such funds may be raised through direct solicitation or other fundraising events, either alone or with other groups, and accept gifts, grants and bequests from individuals, corporations, foundations, governmental agencies and public and private organizations and institutions. All such funds, gifts, grants or bequests received pursuant to this section shall be deposited in the Kansas-Ireland trade commission fund established in section 4, and amendments thereto, and all expenditures from such fund shall be for the purposes of

the commission and upon the majority vote of the commission.

Sec. 3. (a) There is hereby established in the state treasury the Kansas-Ireland trade commission fund which shall be administered by the chairperson of the Kansas-Ireland trade commission or the chairperson's designee. At the request of the chairperson, the secretary of commerce or the secretary's designee shall serve as the designee of the chairperson with respect to administration of the fund. All moneys received from any private donation, gift, grant or bequest made to the commission for the purposes of this act shall be remitted to the state treasurer in accordance with the provisions of K.S.A. 75-4215, and amendments thereto. Upon receipt of each such remittance, the state treasurer shall deposit the entire amount in the state treasury to the credit of the Kansas-Ireland trade commission fund. All expenditures from the Kansas-Ireland trade commission fund shall be for furthering the purposes of the Kansas-Ireland trade commission upon a majority vote of the commission and in accordance with appropriation acts upon warrants of the director of accounts and reports issued pursuant to vouchers approved by the chairperson of the Kansas-Ireland trade commission or the chairperson's designee.

(b) On or before the 10th of each month, the director of accounts and reports shall transfer from the state general fund to the Kansas-Ireland trade commission fund interest earnings based on:

(1) The average daily balance of moneys in the Kansas-Ireland trade commission fund for the preceding month; and

(2) the net earnings rate for the pooled money investment portfolio for the preceding month.

Sec. 4. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its publication in the statute book.