



OHIO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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Ohio Chamber of Commerce
Proponent Testimony – House Bill 291
June 11, 2025

Chairman Hoops, Vice Chair Lorenz, Ranking Member Abdullahi, and members of the Ohio House Development Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 291.

For 132 years, the Ohio Chamber has served as the state’s leading business advocate and represents over 8,000 companies that do business in Ohio. Our mission is to aggressively champion free enterprise, economic competitiveness, and growth for the benefit of all Ohioans.

The Ohio Chamber has long advocated for policies that strengthen Ohio’s global footprint, support Ohio businesses in global markets, and increase investment in our state. House Bill 291 (HB 291) does that by creating the Ohio International Trade Commission, a structured, strategic platform to promote multilateral trade and investment opportunities, joint research agreements, business and academic exchanges, and the creation of technology centers.

HB 291 enhances Ohio’s commitment to building deeper economic and strategic partnerships with key international markets beginning with Japan, Ireland, and Israel, who have meaningful trade ties with Ohio. According to the [Ohio Department of Development’s 2023 Export Report](#), exports to Japan decreased overall but Japan was still our fourth largest export market, totaling \$2.1 billion in goods. Ireland saw a nearly 6% increase in exports from Ohio businesses. While trade with Israel and Japan declined slightly from 2022 to 2023, it underscores the need for renewed investment in sustaining and expanding trade with these nations.

At no cost to taxpayers, HB 291 provides a practical, business-friendly strategy for strengthening Ohio’s global competitiveness. The Ohio Chamber appreciates being named to serve on the Commission and looks forward to representing the business community to promote trade, investment, and economic growth between Ohio, the countries in HB 291, and those to be determined by the Department.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on HB 291. The Ohio Chamber supports the Commission and appreciates the opportunity to serve.