

I_136_0373-1

136th General Assembly
Regular Session
2025-2026

Sub. H. B. No. 291

To enact section 122.97 of the Revised Code to 1
create the Ohio International Trade Commission. 2

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:

Section 1. That section 122.97 of the Revised Code be 3
enacted to read as follows: 4

Sec. 122.97. (A) (1) The Ohio international trade 5
commission is created. The commission shall, as between Ohio and 6
five regions designated by the director of development, advance 7
all of the following: 8

(a) Multilateral trade and investment; 9

(b) Joint research agreements on issues of mutual 10
interest, particularly regarding electronic and cyber warfare 11
capabilities; 12

(c) Business and academic exchanges; 13

(d) Creation of an international trade center to 14
facilitate collaboration between all regions represented in the 15
commission; 16

(e) Creation of technology centers to promote 17



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<u>collaboration between academic and business interests;</u>	18
<u>(f) Mutual economic support;</u>	19
<u>(g) Mutual investment in infrastructure;</u>	20
<u>(h) Other issues as determined by the commission.</u>	21
<u>(2) The director shall select Japan, Israel, and Ireland</u> <u>as three of the five initial designated regions.</u>	22 23
<u>(3) The director shall designate initial regions not later</u> <u>than ninety days after the effective date of this section. The</u> <u>director may designate new regions every four years subsequent</u> <u>to the initial designations, provided that the total number of</u> <u>different designated regions represented on the commission is</u> <u>not more or less than five.</u>	24 25 26 27 28 29
<u>(B) The commission shall consist of the following members:</u>	30
<u>(1) Two members of the senate, appointed by the president</u> <u>of the senate, who have knowledge of, or current or past</u> <u>involvement in, organizations that promote international affairs</u> <u>or have interest in the well-being of trade relations between</u> <u>this state and the regions designated pursuant to division (A)</u> <u>of this section;</u>	31 32 33 34 35 36
<u>(2) Two members of the house of representatives, appointed</u> <u>by the speaker of the house of representatives, who have</u> <u>knowledge of, or current or past involvement in, organizations</u> <u>that promote international affairs or have interest in the well-</u> <u>being of trade relations between this state and the regions</u> <u>designated pursuant to division (A) of this section;</u>	37 38 39 40 41 42
<u>(3) Five members appointed by and with the mutual consent</u> <u>of the nonvoting members specified in divisions (B)(4) to (6) of</u> <u>this section, with the advice and consent of the senate, who</u>	43 44 45

shall consist of one member for each region designated by the 46
director pursuant to division (A) of this section who represents 47
the region-American communities or interests in this state of 48
the member's respective region. As initially designated pursuant 49
to division (A) (2) of this section, Japan shall be represented 50
by one member who represents the Japanese export trade 51
organization or, if such individual is unavailable, one member 52
who represents Japanese-American communities or interest in this 53
state; 54

(4) One nonvoting member appointed by the board of 55
directors of the nonprofit corporation formed under section 56
187.01 of the Revised Code who represents the nonprofit 57
corporation formed under section 187.01 of the Revised Code; 58

(5) One nonvoting member appointed by the chief executive 59
of the Ohio chamber of commerce who represents the Ohio chamber 60
of commerce, if such individual is available; 61

(6) One nonvoting member who represents each 62
administrative department, as defined in section 121.01 of the 63
Revised Code, that has a division or office dedicated to 64
international trade issues, including the department of 65
agriculture, appointed by the director of each respective 66
department. 67

(C) Initial members of the commission shall be appointed 68
not later than ninety days after the effective date of this 69
section. Members of the commission appointed under divisions (B) 70
(1) and (2) of this section shall serve terms of two years or 71
for the remainder of the member's legislative term, whichever is 72
less. Members of the commission appointed under division (B) (3) 73
of this section shall serve terms of four years. Any vacancy on 74
the commission shall be filled in the same manner as the 75

original appointment. 76

(D) Members of the commission shall serve without 77
compensation. 78

(E) (1) The commission shall meet and hold hearings at the 79
places it designates throughout the state. 80

(2) The board of directors of the nonprofit corporation 81
formed under section 187.01 of the Revised Code shall select a 82
chairperson from among the members of the commission. The 83
chairperson may appoint from the commission members of 84
subcommittees and subcommittee chairpersons at the chairperson's 85
discretion. 86

(3) A majority of the members of the commission, excluding 87
nonvoting members, constitutes a quorum for the transaction of 88
the business of the commission. 89

(F) Not later than fifteen months after the effective date 90
of this section, and annually thereafter, the commission shall 91
issue a report of its activities during the preceding year, and 92
any associated findings and recommendations, to the governor, 93
the president of the senate, and the speaker of the house of 94
representatives. 95

(G) The commission may raise funds through direct 96
solicitation or other fundraising events alone, or with other 97
groups, and accept gifts, grants, and bequests from individuals, 98
corporations, foundations, governmental agencies, and public and 99
private organizations and institutions. The funds, gifts, 100
grants, or bequests received pursuant to this section shall be 101
deposited to the Ohio international trade commission fund, which 102
is created in the state treasury. The commission shall use the 103
fund to defray the commission's administrative expenses and to 104

carry out its purposes set forth in this section.

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