

As Introduced

136th General Assembly

Regular Session

2025-2026

H. B. No. 291

Representatives Mathews, T., Santucci

Cosponsors: Representatives Williams, Newman, Hoops, Claggett, Thomas, D.

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) The Ohio international trade commission 5
is created. The commission shall, as between Ohio and Japan, 6
Ireland, Israel, and two other nations designated by the 7
director of development, advance all of the following: 8

(1) Multilateral trade and investment; 9

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

(3) Business and academic exchanges; 13

(4) Creation of technology centers to promote 14
collaboration between academic and business interests; 15

(5) Mutual economic support; 16

(6) Mutual investment in infrastructure; 17

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| <u>(7) Other issues as determined by the commission.</u> | 18 |
| <u>(B) The commission shall consist of the following members:</u> | 19 |
| <u>(1) Three members of the senate, appointed by the</u> | 20 |
| <u>president of the senate, who have knowledge of, or current or</u> | 21 |
| <u>past involvement in, organizations that promote international</u> | 22 |
| <u>affairs or have interest in the well-being of trade relations</u> | 23 |
| <u>between this state and the nations specified in division (A) of</u> | 24 |
| <u>this section;</u> | 25 |
| <u>(2) Three members of the house of representatives,</u> | 26 |
| <u>appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives, who</u> | 27 |
| <u>have knowledge of, or current or past involvement in,</u> | 28 |
| <u>organizations that promote international affairs or have</u> | 29 |
| <u>interest in the well-being of trade relations between this state</u> | 30 |
| <u>and the nations specified in division (A) of this section;</u> | 31 |
| <u>(3) Eight members appointed by and with the mutual consent</u> | 32 |
| <u>of the director of development and the adjutant general, with</u> | 33 |
| <u>the advice and consent of the senate, who shall consist of the</u> | 34 |
| <u>following:</u> | 35 |
| <u>(a) One member who represents the nonprofit corporation</u> | 36 |
| <u>formed under section 187.01 of the Revised Code;</u> | 37 |
| <u>(b) One member who represents the Japanese export trade</u> | 38 |
| <u>organization or, if such individual is unavailable, one member</u> | 39 |
| <u>who represents Japanese-American communities or interest in this</u> | 40 |
| <u>state;</u> | 41 |
| <u>(c) One member who represents Israeli-American communities</u> | 42 |
| <u>or interest in this state;</u> | 43 |
| <u>(d) One member who represents Irish-American communities</u> | 44 |
| <u>or interest in this state;</u> | 45 |

(e) Two members who represent the communities or interest 46
in this state of one of the two nations designated by the 47
director of development pursuant to division (A) of this 48
section; 49

(f) Two members who represent the communities or interest 50
in this state of the other of the two nations designated by the 51
director of development pursuant to division (A) of this section 52
that is not represented under division (A) (3) (e) of this 53
section. 54

(C) Initial members of the commission shall be appointed 55
not later than ninety days after the effective date of this 56
section. Members of the commission appointed under divisions (B) 57
(1) and (2) of this section shall serve terms of two years or 58
for the remainder of the member's legislative term, whichever is 59
less. Members of the commission appointed under division (B) (3) 60
of this section shall serve terms of four years. Any vacancy on 61
the commission shall be filled in the same manner as the 62
original appointment. 63

(D) Members of the commission shall serve without 64
compensation. 65

(E) (1) The commission shall meet and hold hearings at the 66
places it designates throughout the state. 67

(2) The board of directors of the nonprofit corporation 68
formed under section 187.01 of the Revised Code shall select a 69
chairperson from among the members of the commission. The 70
chairperson may appoint from the commission members of 71
subcommittees and subcommittee chairpersons at the chairperson's 72
discretion. 73

(3) A majority of the members of the commission 74

constitutes a quorum for the transaction of the business of the 75
commission. 76

(F) Not later than fifteen months after the effective date 77
of this section, and annually thereafter, the commission shall 78
issue a report of its activities during the preceding year, and 79
any associated findings and recommendations, to the governor, 80
the president of the senate, and the speaker of the house of 81
representatives. 82

(G) The commission may raise funds through direct 83
solicitation or other fundraising events alone, or with other 84
groups, and accept gifts, grants, and bequests from individuals, 85
corporations, foundations, governmental agencies, and public and 86
private organizations and institutions. The funds, gifts, 87
grants, or bequests received pursuant to this section shall be 88
deposited to the Ohio international trade commission fund, which 89
is created in the state treasury. The commission shall use the 90
fund to defray the commission's administrative expenses and to 91
carry out its purposes set forth in this section. 92