

House Bill 980

By: Representatives Bonner of the 73rd, Stephens of the 164th, Petrea of the 166th, Roberts of the 52nd, Tran of the 80th, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 12 of Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
2 commissions and other agencies, so as to create the Georgia-Ireland Trade Commission; to
3 provide for members and purpose of the commission; to provide for annual reporting; to
4 create a fund for commission expenses; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting
5 laws; and for other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 Chapter 12 of Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to commissions
9 and other agencies, is amended by adding a new article to read as follows:

10 "ARTICLE 9

11 50-12-140.

12 (a) There is established the Georgia-Ireland Trade Commission which is created to
13 advance bilateral trade and investment between Georgia and Ireland. The trade
14 commission shall consist of 15 members to be appointed as follows:

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- 15 (1) Four members shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives,
16 two of whom must be members of the House of Representatives;
- 17 (2) Four members shall be appointed by the President of the Senate, two of whom must
18 be members of the Senate; and
- 19 (3) Seven members shall be appointed by the Governor as follows:
- 20 (A) The commissioner of economic development or his or her designee;
21 (B) The Commissioner of Agriculture or his or her designee;
22 (C) Two representatives of state institutions of higher education;
23 (D) Two members representing Irish Americans or Irish American communities in
24 Georgia; and
25 (E) One representative of a Georgia business organization or a trade organization.
- 26 (b) The members of the commission shall be appointed for terms of four years each and
27 until their successors are appointed and qualified, except that the seven members appointed
28 by the Governor shall serve initial terms of two years each, the four members appointed by
29 the President of the Senate shall serve initial terms of three years each, and the four
30 members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall serve initial terms
31 of four years each. Members may be reappointed and shall include:
- 32 (1) The commissioner of economic development or his or her designee;
33 (2) The Commissioner of Agriculture or his or her designee;
34 (3) One representative of a state institution of higher education;
35 (4) At least two members representing Irish Americans or Irish American communities
36 in Georgia; and
37 (5) One representative of a Georgia business organization or a trade organization.
- 38 (c) All appointments shall be made no later than 90 days following the date of enactment
39 of this article. A vacancy in the membership of the commission shall be filled in the same
40 manner as the original appointment was made.

41 (d) Members of the commission shall serve without compensation but may be reimbursed
42 for expenses actually incurred in the performance of their duties, within the limit of funds
43 appropriated to the commission or otherwise made available to such commission for its
44 purposes.

45 (e) The commission shall meet and hold hearings at the places and times it designates
46 throughout the state.

47 (f) The Governor shall designate a chairperson or cochairpersons from among the
48 members of the commission, who shall serve in that capacity at the pleasure of the
49 Governor. The chairperson or cochairpersons, as appropriate, may appoint from among
50 the commission members subcommittees or subcommittee chairpersons at their discretion.
51 A majority of the members of the commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction
52 of the business of the commission.

53 (g)(1) The purpose of the Georgia-Ireland Trade Commission is to:

- 54 (A) Advance bilateral trade and investment between Georgia and Ireland;
55 (B) Initiate joint action on policy issues of mutual interest to Georgia and Ireland;
56 (C) Promote business and academic exchanges between Georgia and Ireland;
57 (D) Encourage mutual economic support between Georgia and Ireland;
58 (E) Encourage mutual investment in the infrastructure of Georgia and Ireland; and
59 (F) Address such other issues as determined by the commission.

60 (2) The commission shall report its findings, results, and recommendations to the
61 Governor and the General Assembly pursuant to this article within one year of its initial
62 organizational meeting and by February 1 of each succeeding year for the activities of the
63 preceding calendar year. The report shall be in writing and include recommendations as
64 are considered appropriate by the commission to effectuate its purpose, as provided by
65 this Code section.

66 (h)(1) The state treasurer shall establish a separate trust fund in the state treasury that
67 shall be known as the Georgia-Ireland Trade Commission Fund, consisting of annual

68 appropriations by the General Assembly; public or private grants, gifts, donations, or
69 contributions; and moneys from any other source, including local, state, or federal
70 program funds dedicated to the fund.

71 (2) The state treasurer shall invest the moneys held in the fund in the same manner in
72 which state funds are invested as authorized by the State Depository Board pursuant to
73 Article 3 of Chapter 17 of this title. Interest earned by the moneys held in the fund shall
74 be accounted for separately and shall be credited to the fund to be disbursed as other
75 moneys in the fund.

76 (3) Moneys held in the fund shall be expended solely as provided in this article."

77 **SECTION 2.**

78 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.