

# **WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

**2023 REGULAR SESSION**

**ENROLLED**

## **House Bill 3307**

BY DELEGATES HANSHAW (MR. SPEAKER), STREET,  
ZATEZALO, WARD, FLUHARTY, PHILLIPS, MCGEEHAN AND  
HOWELL

[Passed March 2, 2023; in effect March 17, 2023]



1 AN ACT to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new article,  
2 designated §29-36-1, §29-36-2, §29-36-3, §29-36-4, §29-36-5, §29-36-6, and §29-36-7,  
3 all relating to establishing the West Virginia-Ireland Trade Commission; establishing  
4 findings; providing for the composition of commission, appointment of members and filling  
5 of vacancies; providing for compensation of commission members; providing for meetings,  
6 selection of a chair, maintenance of records, and a quorum; setting forth purposes of the  
7 commission; requiring commission to make certain reports, findings, and  
8 recommendations to Governor and Legislature; providing for acceptance of funds by  
9 commission; and providing an effective date.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

**ARTICLE 36. WEST VIRGINIA-IRELAND TRADE COMMISSION.**

**§29-36-1. Findings.**

1 *Findings*—the Legislature finds that:

2 Over 15 percent of West Virginia’s population is of Irish descent, which, according to the  
3 Irish diplomat Barbara Jones, represents a higher figure than that in Boston or New York City;

4 The ties that bind Ireland to West Virginia are deep and lasting, reflected on West Virginia’s  
5 map from Ireland to Irish Mountain, from Tyrone to Tralee; and

6 Irish heritage has been the fortunate lot of many great West Virginians, such as  
7 philanthropist Bernard P. McDonough, the inventor Michael Owens, and US Senator John Kenna;

8 Ireland and West Virginia are attempting to reinvent their economies for success in the  
9 twenty-first century; and

10 West Virginians have both historic and practical reasons to desire the building of firmer  
11 commercial links with Ireland.

**§29-36-2. Establishment of commission; Composition; Appointments; Vacancies.**

1 For these and other reasons, there is hereby established the West Virginia-Ireland Trade  
2 Commission. The commission shall consist of 9 members, to be appointed as follows:

3 (a) Two members of the Senate, who shall be appointed by the President of the Senate,  
4 shall have knowledge of or current or past involvement in organizations that promote Irish affairs,  
5 or shall have interest in the well-being of trade relations between West Virginia and Ireland; and  
6 two members of the House of Delegates, who shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of  
7 Delegates, shall have knowledge of or current or past involvement in organizations that promote  
8 Irish affairs, or shall have interest in the well-being of trade relations between West Virginia and  
9 Ireland. The legislative members of the commission shall serve during the two-year legislative  
10 term in which the appointments are made.

11 (b) Five members of the commission shall be appointed by the Governor, with the advice  
12 and consent of the Senate, and shall serve for a term of four years. The members thus appointed  
13 shall include at least one representative from: a public institution of higher education; the West  
14 Virginia Chamber of Commerce, or its successor organization; and at least two public members  
15 shall represent Irish American communities or interest, neither of whom shall be members of the  
16 same political party.

17 (c) All appointments shall be made no later than July 1, 2023. A vacancy in the  
18 membership of the commission shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment  
19 was made.

**§29-36-3. Compensation; Meetings; Chair; Records; Quorum.**

1 (a) Members of the commission shall receive the same compensation authorized by law  
2 for members of the Legislature for the interim duties for each day, or portion thereof, the member  
3 is engaged in the discharge of official duties. All members shall be reimbursed for their actual and  
4 necessary expenses incurred in the discharge of official duties, except that mileage shall be  
5 reimbursed at the same rate as that authorized for members of the Legislature.

6 (b) (1) The commission shall meet and hold hearings at the places it designates throughout  
7 the State.

8 (2) The commission shall elect a chair from amongst its members. The chair may appoint  
9 from among the commission members subcommittees and subcommittee chairs at their  
10 discretion.

11 (c) The commission shall keep records of all proceedings which shall be public and open  
12 to inspection, shall adopt a seal, and shall exercise and perform the duties prescribed by this  
13 section.

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

**§29-36-4. Purpose of Commission.**

1 The purpose of the West Virginia-Ireland Trade Commission shall be to:

- 2 (1) Advance bilateral trade and investment between West Virginia and Ireland;
- 3 (2) Initiate joint action on policy issues of mutual interest to West Virginia and Ireland;
- 4 (3) Promote business and academic exchanges between West Virginia and Ireland;
- 5 (4) Encourage mutual economic support between West Virginia and Ireland;
- 6 (5) Encourage mutual investment in the infrastructure of West Virginia and Ireland; and
- 7 (6) Address such other issues as determined by the Commission.

**§29-36-5. Reports**

1 The commission shall report its findings, results, and recommendations to the Governor,  
2 and the Legislature, within one year of its initial organizational meeting and by February 1st of  
3 each succeeding year for the activities of the preceding calendar year. The report shall be in  
4 writing and include recommendations as deemed appropriate by the commission to effectuate its  
5 purpose, as provided by this section.

**§29-36-6. Funds.**

1 The West Virginia-Ireland Trade Commission shall be authorized to raise funds, through  
2 direct solicitation or other fundraising events, alone, or with other groups, and accept gifts, grants,  
3 and bequests from individuals, corporations, foundations, governmental agencies, and public and

- 4 private organizations and institutions, to defray the commission's administrative expenses and to
- 5 carry out its purposes.

**§29-36-7. Effective Date.**

- 1           This act shall take effect March 17, 2023.

The Clerk of the House of Delegates and the Clerk of the Senate hereby certify that the foregoing bill is correctly enrolled.

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*Clerk of the House of Delegates*

.....  
*Clerk of the Senate*

Originated in the House of Delegates.

In effect March 17, 2023.

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*Speaker of the House of Delegates*

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*President of the Senate*

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The within is ..... this the.....  
Day of ....., 2023.

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*Governor*