

SB 961 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Veterans, Emergency Management, Federal and World Affairs

Action Date: 03/13/25

Action: Do pass with amendments and requesting referral to Ways and Means. (Printed A-Engrossed.)

Vote: 4-0-1-0

Yeas: 4 - Manning Jr, Meek, Smith DB, Thatcher

Exc: 1 - Woods

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 2/25, 3/13

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure establishes the Oregon-Ireland Sister State Committee, specifying its membership and term limits, duties and permissible activities, staff support, and member compensation.

Detailed Summary:

Establishes the Oregon-Ireland Sister State Committee.

Specifies the Committee membership, which includes:

- One nonvoting member from the Oregon Senate;
- One nonvoting member from the Oregon House of Representatives;
- Seven Governor-appointed members, with at least one each from an Oregon institution of higher education; a statewide trade organization; urban interests in Oregon; and rural or agricultural interests in Oregon.
- Specifies that legislators may only serve while they are members of the Legislative Assembly, and that non-legislators serve two-year terms. Entitles legislators to per diem except when outside the United States. Directs the Legislative Policy and Research director to provide administrative staff support for one Committee meeting held before each delegation visit and one Committee meeting held after each delegation visit.

Permits the Committee to:

- Organize activities for and host visiting delegations from Ireland;
- Organize activities for and participate in delegations visiting Ireland, which the Committee may do as often as biennially;
- Provide for information exchange between Oregon and Ireland;
- Work with representatives of Ireland on joint projects; and
- Take actions necessary to coordinate and promote Oregon to Ireland exports and Irish investments in Oregon.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Process of gaining Irish citizenship
- Delegation visits, and whether Northern Ireland would be included
- Amendment content
- Trade products between Oregon and Ireland

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

The amendment modifies Committee membership to instead include one nonvoting State Senator; one nonvoting State Representative; and seven members appointed by the Governor, representing an Oregon institution of higher education, statewide trade organization, urban interests in the state, and rural or agricultural interests in

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the state. Committee members may elect a chairperson among themselves, and the Committee may hold one or two meetings per calendar year.

BACKGROUND:

Alabama, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and West Virginia are among states that have established or are in the process of starting Ireland Trade Commissions. As of 2023, Oregon exports to Ireland are the fourth highest of any U.S. state, with roughly \$1.25 billion in exports, and \$601 million in imports, with computer and electronic products, and chemicals, being the largest product categories. According to 2023 five-year American Community Survey estimates, roughly 10.8 percent of Oregon's population claims Irish ancestry. Ireland had a population of over 5.1 million in its 2022 census, is a member of the European Union, and its statistics office cites a 2022 GDP equivalent to roughly \$527 billion.

Senate Bill 961 A establishes the Oregon-Ireland Sister State Committee.