

§ 23. THE COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE

(a) Definitions. For the purposes of this section: "International Trade Agreement" means a trade agreement between the federal government and a foreign country. International Trade Agreement does not include a trade agreement between the state and a foreign country to which the federal government is not a party.

(b) Membership. There is created a Commission on International Trade and State Sovereignty consisting of:

(1) the Chair of the House Committee on Commerce or his or her designee;

(2) the Chair of the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs or his or her designee;

(3) a representative of a nonprofit environmental organization, appointed by the Governor from a list provided by the Vermont Natural Resources Council;

(4) a representative of organized labor, appointed by the Governor from a list provided by Vermont AFL-CIO, Vermont NEA, and the Vermont State Employees' Association;

(5) the Secretary of Commerce and Community Development or his or her designee;

(6) the Attorney General or his or her designee;

(7) a representative of an exporting Vermont business, appointed by the Governor;

(8) a representative of a Vermont business actively involved in international trade, appointed by the Governor;

(9) the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets or his or her designee; and

(10) a representative of a Vermont chamber of commerce, appointed by the Governor.

(c) Powers and duties.

(1) The Commission shall conduct an annual assessment of the legal and economic impacts of International Trade Agreements on State and local laws, State sovereignty, and the business environment.

(2) It shall provide a mechanism for citizens and legislators to voice their concerns, which it shall use to make policy recommendations to the General Assembly, to the Governor, to Vermont's congressional delegation, or to the trade representatives of the United States government. Recommendations shall be designed to protect Vermont's job and business environment, and State sovereignty from any negative impacts of trade agreements.

(3) It may recommend legislation or preferred practices and shall work with interested groups in other states to develop means to resolve the conflicting goals and tension inherent in the relationship between international trade and state sovereignty.

(4) As provided for in 9 V.S.A. chapter 111A, the Commission shall consider and develop formal recommendations with respect to how the State

should best respond to challenges and opportunities posed by a particular International Agreement.

(d) Reporting. The Commission shall submit an annual report, which shall be prepared by the Secretary of Commerce and Community Development, to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development, the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs, the Governor, and Vermont's congressional delegation. The report shall contain information acquired pursuant to activities carried out under subsection (c) of this section. The provisions of 2 V.S.A. § 20(d) (expiration of required reports) shall not apply to the report to be made under this subsection.

(e) Staff services. The Commission shall be entitled to staff services of the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, the Legislative Council, and the Joint Fiscal Committee.

(f) Per diem. For attendance at a meeting when the General Assembly is not in session, legislative members of the Commission shall be entitled to the same per diem compensation and reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses as provided members of standing committees under 2 V.S.A. § 406. Except for members employed by the State, members of the Commission shall be entitled to the same per diem compensation as provided under 32 V.S.A. § 1010(a) and mileage reimbursement as provided under 32 V.S.A. § 1267.