



**VERMONT-IRELAND
TRADE COMMISSION**

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Vermont-Ireland Trade Commission is to foster, support, and expand economic, educational, and cultural ties between the State of Vermont and the island of Ireland. Drawing on successful models from other state Irish trade commissions, its core goals could include:

1. Economic Development & Trade
2. Cultural and Educational Exchange
3. Government & Policy Collaboration
4. Tourism & Diaspora Engagement

Vermont and Ireland: A Deep Connection

In the wake of the Irish Famine, over 10,000 Irish born immigrants settled in Vermont.

The settled primarily in Burlington, Barre, Rutland and worked in railroads, mills, logging, and stone quarries.



Still Irish After All These Years!

Today over 17% of Vermont Irish residents claim Irish ancestry-

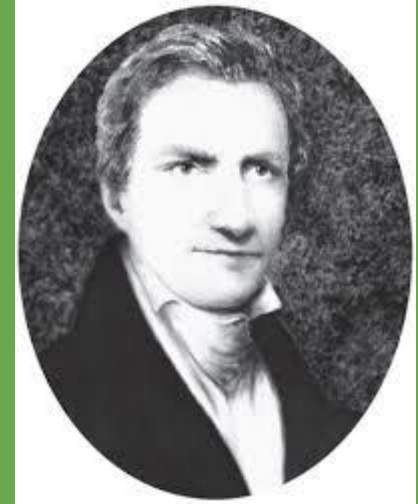
Making us the fourth most Irish state in the country!



Shaping States and Nations

Rep. Matthew Lyons - Dublin-born Vermont congressman and founder

Sen. Patrick Leahy - An architect of the Good Friday Agreement



A State Visit

Last legislative session, Senator Mark Daly, Cathaoirleach of Seanad Éireann visited Vermont to testify in support of a Vermont-Ireland Trade Commission and address the House.



Irish Trade Commissions: A National Movement

Since then, nearly 30 states have passed an Ireland trade commission, including:

- Connecticut
- Maine
- Rhode Island
- New Hampshire
- Massachusetts
- New York



Why Ireland?

In the post-Brexit era, Ireland is now the only English-speaking country fully inside the European Union - making it the ideal bridge between American innovation and the European single market.

Where the United Kingdom once served as the entry point for U.S. firms, Ireland now fills that role, offering:

- Unrestricted access to the EU's 450 million consumers
- Business-friendly policies within the EU framework
- A highly educated, tech-savvy workforce
- Shared values of entrepreneurship, democracy, and sustainability

A Natural Partner for Vermont

Vermont and Ireland share a rural innovation economy, emphasizing clean energy, agriculture, and small business development.

With significant Irish-American heritage in Vermont, there's strong cultural alignment and existing goodwill.

A trade commission would help match Vermont companies with Irish partners, investors, and EU networks - and vice versa.



Connections Are Being Made: Irish Caucus Visits

2023:

Rep. Mollie Burke, Rep. Heather Chase, Rep. Sara Coffey, Rep. Diane Lanpher, Rep. Monique Priestley, Rep. Conor Casey

2024:

Rep. Carol Ode, Rep. Seth Chase

2025:

Rep. Gina Galfetti, Rep. Mark Mihaly, Rep. Teddy Wasazack, Rep. Shawn Sweeney

Broad Support

H.667 (last biennium) - 25 Tri-partisan cosponsors passed House on a voice vote on 3/20/24

S.122 - Passed full Senate on 3/26/25

Supported by Treasurer Mike Pieciak as the Commission would be housed in his office

Trade, Diplomacy & Peace: Why Economic Ties with Ireland Matter

Ireland's modern economic success is inseparable from its journey toward peace, particularly in the wake of The Good Friday Agreement of 1998, which ended decades of conflict in Northern Ireland.

- Strong international economic relationships — especially with the U.S. — have been a key pillar of sustaining that peace.
- U.S. and EU investment in Ireland has created shared prosperity across both the Republic and Northern Ireland, demonstrating that economic opportunity is a stabilizing force.
- Vermont, by strengthening its economic ties with Ireland, becomes part of that legacy: showing that small states can help uphold peace through partnership.



Go raibh maith agaibh!