



# Senate

General Assembly

**File No. 70**

February Session, 2026

Substitute Senate Bill No. 132

*Senate, March 19, 2026*

The Committee on Commerce reported through SEN. HARTLEY of the 15th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

## ***AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE CONNECTICUT-GERMANY TRADE COMMISSION.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

- 1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a
- 2 Connecticut-Germany Trade Commission, which shall be part of the
- 3 Legislative Department.
  
- 4 (b) The commission shall consist of the following members:
  
- 5 (1) Two appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives;
  
- 6 (2) Two appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate;
  
- 7 (3) Two appointed by the majority leader of the House of
- 8 Representatives;
  
- 9 (4) Two appointed by the majority leader of the Senate;
  
- 10 (5) Two appointed by the minority leader of the House of

11 Representatives;

12 (6) Two appointed by the minority leader of the Senate;

13 (7) Two members of the joint standing committee of the General  
14 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to commerce, one of  
15 whom shall be appointed by the Senate chairperson of such committee  
16 and one of whom shall be appointed by the House chairperson of such  
17 committee;

18 (8) The ranking members of the joint standing committee of the  
19 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to commerce,  
20 or their designees;

21 (9) Three persons appointed by the Governor;

22 (10) A representative of a public institution of higher education in the  
23 state, who shall be appointed by the Governor;

24 (11) A representative of a chamber of commerce in the state, who shall  
25 be appointed by the Governor;

26 (12) Two representatives of German or German-American  
27 communities in the state, who shall be appointed by the Governor and  
28 shall not be members of the same political party; and

29 (13) Any additional members, as deemed necessary by the  
30 chairpersons of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly  
31 having cognizance of matters relating to commerce.

32 (c) The members of the commission shall each have current or past  
33 involvement in organizations that promote German affairs or are  
34 interested in the well-being of trade relations between the state and  
35 Germany.

36 (d) Any member of the commission appointed under subdivisions (1)  
37 to (6), inclusive, and subdivision (13) of subsection (b) of this section  
38 may be a member of the General Assembly.

39 (e) (1) All initial appointments to the commission shall be made not  
40 later than October 1, 2026. Initial appointments made by the Governor,  
41 the majority leader of the House of Representatives and the minority  
42 leader of the House of Representatives shall terminate on September 30,  
43 2029. Initial appointments made by the speaker of the House of  
44 Representatives, the president pro tempore of the Senate, the majority  
45 leader of the Senate and the minority leader of the Senate shall terminate  
46 on September 30, 2030. The initial and subsequent terms of members  
47 appointed by the chairpersons of the joint standing committee of the  
48 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to commerce  
49 shall be coterminous with the terms of the appointing authority for each  
50 such member in accordance with the provisions of section 4-1a of the  
51 general statutes.

52 (2) Appointed members of the commission shall serve for four-year  
53 terms which shall commence on the date of appointment, except as  
54 provided in subdivision (1) of this subsection. Members shall continue  
55 to serve until their successors are appointed.

56 (f) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro  
57 tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the commission  
58 from among the members of the commission. Such chairpersons shall  
59 schedule the first meeting of the commission, which shall be held not  
60 later than November 1, 2026.

61 (g) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the  
62 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to consumer  
63 protection shall serve as administrative staff of the commission.

64 (h) Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority. Any  
65 vacancy occurring other than by expiration of term shall be filled for the  
66 balance of the unexpired term.

67 (i) A majority of the commission shall constitute a quorum for the  
68 transaction of any business.

69 (j) The members of the commission shall serve without

70 compensation, but shall, within the limits of available funds, be  
71 reimbursed for expenses necessarily incurred in the performance of  
72 their duties.

73 (k) The commission shall have the following powers and duties: (1)  
74 To advance bilateral trade and investment between the state and  
75 Germany; (2) to initiate joint action on policy issues of mutual interest  
76 to the state and Germany; (3) to promote business and academic  
77 exchanges between the state and Germany; (4) to encourage mutual  
78 economic support between the state and Germany; (5) to encourage  
79 mutual investment in the infrastructure of the state and Germany; (6) to  
80 address such other issues as determined by the commission; (7) to obtain  
81 from any executive department, board, commission or other agency of  
82 the state such assistance and data as are necessary and available to carry  
83 out the purposes of this section; (8) to accept any gift, donation or  
84 bequest for the purpose of performing the duties described in this  
85 section; and (9) to perform such other acts as may be necessary and  
86 appropriate to carry out the duties described in this section.

87 (l) The commission shall meet quarterly, or as often as deemed  
88 necessary by the chairpersons or a majority of the commission. Any  
89 appointed member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings or  
90 who fails to attend fifty per cent of all meetings held during any  
91 calendar year shall be deemed to have resigned from the commission.

92 (m) Not later than February 1, 2028, and annually thereafter, the  
93 commission shall submit a report, in accordance with the provisions of  
94 section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the Governor, the Commissioner  
95 of Economic and Community Development and the joint standing  
96 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters  
97 relating to commerce on the activities of the commission during the  
98 preceding year, which shall include, but need not be limited to, any  
99 recommendations for policy changes and amendments to the general  
100 statutes necessary to effectuate the purposes of the commission.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
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Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section
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**CE**      *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:**

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 27 \$	FY 28 \$
Legislative Mgmt.	GF - Potential Cost	Minimal	Minimal

Note: GF=General Fund

**Municipal Impact:** None

**Explanation**

The bill establishes a Connecticut-Germany Trade Commission resulting in a potential minimal cost to the Office of Legislative Management. The bill specifies that commission members serve without compensation but can be reimbursed for necessary expenses resulting in a potential cost to the extent reimbursements occur.

**The Out Years**

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

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**OLR Bill Analysis****sSB 132*****AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE CONNECTICUT-GERMANY TRADE COMMISSION.*****SUMMARY**

This bill establishes a Connecticut-Germany Trade Commission within the Legislative Department to, between Connecticut and Germany:

1. advance bilateral trade and investment,
2. initiate joint action on policy issues of mutual interest,
3. promote business and academic exchanges,
4. encourage mutual economic support and infrastructure investment, and
5. address other issues the commission determines.

To carry out its duties, the bill also authorizes the commission to (1) obtain necessary assistance and data from any executive department, board, commission, or state agency; (2) perform necessary and appropriate acts; and (3) accept gifts, donations, or bequests.

Under the bill, the commission's membership includes 23 appointed or ex-officio members, as well as any additional members the Commerce Committee chairs determine are necessary.

The bill requires the commission, starting by February 1, 2028, to annually report to the governor, Department of Economic and Community Development, and Commerce Committee on its activities during the prior year, including any recommendations for policy and legislative changes needed to carry out its purposes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

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**MEMBERSHIP AND MEETINGS****Members**

Under the bill, the commission includes the following 23 appointed members, as well as any additional members the Commerce Committee chairpersons determine are necessary:

1. two members each appointed by the six legislative leaders;
2. two Commerce Committee members, one each appointed by the committee chairpersons;
3. the Commerce Committee's ranking members, or their designees;
4. three members appointed by the governor;
5. one representative of a Connecticut public college or university, appointed by the governor;
6. one Connecticut chamber of commerce representative, appointed by the governor; and
7. two representatives of German or German-American communities in the state from different political parties, appointed by the governor.

Under the bill, commission members must be (1) currently or formerly involved in organizations promoting German affairs or (2) interested in trade relations between Connecticut and Germany.

**Appointments**

The bill requires appointing authorities to make their initial appointments by October 1, 2026, and fill any vacancies. Vacancies occurring other than by term expiration must be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term. All members, except those appointed by the governor, may be legislators.

**Terms**

Under the bill, members generally serve four-year terms, until their successors are appointed, except as follows:

1. initial gubernatorial and House majority and minority leader appointments end on September 30, 2029;
2. initial House speaker, Senate president pro tempore, and Senate majority and minority leader appointments end on September 30, 2030; and
3. initial and subsequent Commerce Committee chairperson appointments end when the term of the appointing committee chairperson ends.

Under the bill, members serve without compensation but are reimbursed, within available funds, for necessary expenses incurred performing their duties.

**Leadership and Meetings**

The bill requires the House speaker and Senate president pro tempore to select the commission’s chairpersons from among its members. The chairpersons must schedule and hold the commission’s first meeting by November 1, 2026.

Under the bill, the commission must meet quarterly or as often as the chairpersons or a majority of the members deem necessary. Members who miss three consecutive meetings or 50% of the meetings in a calendar year are deemed to have resigned. A majority of members is a quorum for conducting business.

The bill requires the General Law Committee’s administrative staff to serve in this capacity for the commission.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Commerce Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute  
 Yea 20 Nay 0 (03/05/2026)