

**OFFICE OF POLICY AND LEGAL ANALYSIS**

Date: February 17, 2021

To: Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Commerce

From: Samuel Senft, Legislative Analyst

**LD 7 An Act To Expand the Membership of the Board of Directors of the Maine International Trade Center (Curry)**

**SUMMARY**

This bill increases the number of directors of the Maine International Trade Center that are elected by the members from 7 to 10.

**TESTIMONY**

<p><b>Proponents:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Presently, MITC has 12 voting board members — 7 elected from the "dues-paying membership" and 5 appointed by the Governor that "must have international business or professional experience."</li><li>• One of the 5 appointed directors is the Director of international Trade at DECD.</li><li>• There are 2 additional, nonvoting, ex officio members named in the statute: the state directors of the US Commercial Service and the US Small Business Administration.</li><li>• This bill would make three changes to the statutory makeup of the board. it would expand the number of elected seats from 7 to 10; it would create an additional ex-officio seat for the President of MITC; and would eliminate the requirement that one of the 5 appointed directors be the Director of international Trade at DECD.</li><li>• The President of the MITC is also the Director of international Trade within DECD. The later position is appointed by the Governor. Statute also provides that the DECD international trade director is made President of MITC, subject to a vote of the MITC board of directors. Finally, the DECD international trade director is also a member of the MITC board. It is therefore possible that the Governor might nominate a trade director, but the MITC board rejects them as President. However, the DECD international trade director would still be part of the board. This would be a difficult situation. Under the new language, it is the MITC president, and not the DECD International Trade Director, who holds the board seat.</li><li>• Desire is for the board to be more representative of the state as a whole,</li><li>• Only 2 of 12 of voting board members are women, and just 4 of 16 total.</li><li>• Only 2 of 11 Maine-based voting members have their place of business outside Cumberland County, and both are from the Bangor region.</li><li>• UMaine's Director of International Programs is on the MITC Board. She is the first member in more than a decade representing UMaine.</li><li>• Expanding the MITC Board would allow for broader representation and help the organization better manage board turnover.</li></ul>
<p><b>Opponents: NONE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li></ul>
<p><b>Neither For Nor Against: NONE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li></ul>

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

- The sponsor indicated that he will be proposing an amendment requested by the Boards and Commissions Office to simplify the process of composing the board of directors. As drafted the bill only changes board membership from 7 to 10 people.

**POTENTIAL ISSUES:**

- None identified

**FISCAL IMPACT: The preliminary fiscal note indicates no fiscal impact**

**Links**

- [LD 7](#)
- [Preliminary fiscal note](#)
- Current statute: [10 MRSA §945-C. Board of directors and officers](#)
- MITC Board of Directors [webpage](#)