

Citizen Trade Policy Commission

Thursday, December 6, 2007

Room 126, State House, Augusta

11:00 AM Commission Business Meeting

Meeting Summary

Members present:, Sen. Margaret Rotundo (co-chair), Sen. Raye, Rep. Treat, Linda Pistner, Jane Aiudi, Leslie Manning, Malcolm Burson, Cynthia Phinney, Matt Schlobohm, Paul Volckhausen, Wade Merritt, Carla Dickstien, Perry Newman, John Palmer and Elise Flemings.

Staff present: Curtis Bentley, Legislative Analyst and Alison Ames, Researcher.

- I. Northeast Regional Meeting** – Commission members that attended the 1st northeast regional meeting of state trade commissions in Portsmouth, New Hampshire on November 18th and 19th (Sen. Rotundo, Rep. Treat, Leslie Manning, Cynthia Phinney and Elise Flemings) gave the commission a report on the that meeting. They reported that both members of the Vermont and New Hampshire trade commissions were present as well as representative from Massachusetts and New Jersey. They reported that it was clear from the meeting that Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont could work together to address trade issues and that these states share many of Maine’s concerns about trade agreements. Attendees of the meeting agreed to hold regional meetings at least annually; to work to improve state/federal consultation; to speak with one voice whenever possible; to expand the commission’s model nationally; and to involve Canada as partners in the process.
- II. Legislative outreach efforts** - Discussed efforts to arrange for Peter Riggs to meet with Joint Standing Committees of the Legislature during his visit to Bates College in January. Staff reported working with committee analysts to identify times that Mr. Riggs may be able to address that analyst’s committee and Sen. Rotundo agreed to talk with leadership. It was suggested that joint committee presentations may be possible.
- III. Subcommittees** – Sen. Rotundo directed subcommittees to meet and discuss the current subcommittee structure and whether or not the subcommittees should continue to meet.
- IV. Public hearing/ roundtable** – Staff briefed the commission on recent efforts to secure a locality for the next public hearing and the responses from Maine’s Congressional Delegation regarding the commission’s invitation to attend one of the public hearings. Staff reported that the date proposed for the next public hearing of January 15th would not work for Maine’s Congressional Delegation because session started back up from the holidays on that day. Will continue to work with Maine’s Congressional Delegation’s staff to find an earlier date in January that may work.

Members of the commission suggested using Youth Alternatives or the South Portland Community Center for the public hearing in Portland. Commission asked staff to look into getting cable show access for Peter Riggs and a representative from the commission for a questions and answer session. Leslie Manning offered to help staff set it up. Commission agreed to hold a one-hour meeting prior to the public hearing to conduct commission business.

- V. Other** – Wade Merritt reported on MITC’s Korean trade mission and NCSL’s Trade Policy Leadership Seminar meeting in Phoenix, AZ. The trade mission was hectic but a huge success and sales projections should be out within the next week. The NCSL meeting attendees represented a balance of state legislatures and it appears that there are approximately 10 states that have or are working on commissions similar to Maine’s. Leslie suggested having an advisory group on economic data – look for models on how to catch economic data. Leslie offered to work on this idea.
- VI. Meeting with Maine International Trade Center-** The commission moved its meeting to the Senator in Augusta to a luncheon meeting with the Board of the Maine International Trade Center (MITC). There was general agreement that the commission and MITC agreed that the two entities were well positioned to work together to ensure Maine realizes the best possible outcome from international trade agreements. The commission as a policy body and MITC as an implementer of existing agreements. Both entities agreed to meet on a more regular basis.
- VII. Next Meeting-** Preliminary agenda items: how to remake subcommittees, having Kaye Wilkie attend by conference call, and USTR monthly updates.
- VIII. Adjournment.** The commission adjourned its meeting at approximately 2:00PM.