

SENATE BILL NO. 267

April 29, 2025, Introduced by Senators GEISS, POLEHANKI, SHINK and CHANG and referred to Committee on Economic and Community Development.

A bill to create a Michigan-African-Caribbean trade commission within the Michigan economic development corporation and to prescribe its powers and duties; to create a fund; and to prescribe the powers and duties of certain state officers and entities.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

1 Sec. 1. (1) The Michigan-African-Caribbean trade commission is
2 created in the Michigan economic development corporation. The
3 commission shall serve as a catalyst and strategic advising body
4 for international economic development, job creation, and mutually
5 beneficial trade between this state and Africa and the Caribbean.

1 The commission shall advance Michigan's competitiveness in global
2 markets through strategic cooperation in the areas of critical
3 minerals, automotive and mobility technology, agricultural
4 products, and information technology services.

5 (2) The commission consists of the following members,
6 appointed by the governor:

7 (a) One representative from a Michigan public institution of
8 higher education selected from a list of 3 or more individuals
9 submitted by the speaker of the house of representatives.

10 (b) One individual from a Michigan-based chamber of commerce
11 or economic development body from a list of 3 or more individuals
12 submitted by the senate majority leader.

13 (c) Two individuals from African, African-American, or
14 Caribbean diaspora communities, 1 of the members selected from a
15 list of 3 or more individuals submitted by the speaker of the house
16 of representatives and 1 of the members selected from a list of 3
17 or more individuals submitted by the senate majority leader.

18 (d) One individual who is a Michigan-based agriculture or
19 commodities sector expert selected from a list of 3 or more
20 individuals submitted by the speaker of the house of
21 representatives.

22 (e) One individual from Michigan-based mobility, energy, or
23 manufacturing sectors selected from a list of 3 or more individuals
24 submitted by the senate majority leader.

25 (f) One individual from the Michigan information technology
26 sector or a digital innovation hub selected from a list of 3 or
27 more individuals submitted by the speaker of the house of
28 representatives.

29 (3) The governor shall appoint the first members of the

1 commission not later than 90 days after the effective date of this
2 act.

3 (4) The term of a member of the commission is 2 years or until
4 a successor is appointed under subsection (2), whichever is later.

5 (5) If a vacancy occurs on the commission, the governor shall
6 appoint an individual to fill the vacancy for the balance of the
7 term.

8 (6) The governor may remove a member of the commission for
9 incompetence, dereliction of duty, malfeasance, misfeasance, or
10 nonfeasance in office, or any other good cause.

11 (7) The governor shall call the first meeting of the
12 commission. At the first meeting, the commission shall elect a
13 member as a chairperson and may elect other officers that it
14 considers necessary or appropriate. The commission shall meet at
15 least quarterly, or more frequently at the call of the chairperson
16 or at the request of 5 or more members.

17 (8) A majority of the members of the commission constitute a
18 quorum for transacting business. A vote in favor by a majority of
19 the members of the commission serving is required for any action of
20 the commission.

21 (9) The commission shall conduct its business in compliance
22 with the open meetings act, 1976 PA 267, MCL 15.261 to 15.275.

23 (10) A writing that is prepared, owned, used, possessed, or
24 retained by the commission in performing an official function is
25 subject to the freedom of information act, 1976 PA 442, MCL 15.231
26 to 15.246.

27 (11) A member of the commission is not entitled to
28 compensation for service on the commission, but the commission may
29 reimburse a member for actual and necessary expenses incurred in

1 serving.

2 (12) The commission shall do all of the following:

3 (a) Advance bilateral trade and investment between Michigan
4 and Africa and the Caribbean.

5 (b) Initiate joint action on policy issues of mutual interest
6 to Michigan and Africa and the Caribbean.

7 (c) Promote business and academic exchanges between Michigan
8 and Africa and the Caribbean.

9 (d) Encourage mutual economic support between Michigan and
10 Africa and the Caribbean.

11 (e) Encourage mutual investment in the infrastructure of
12 Michigan and Africa and the Caribbean.

13 (f) Address any other issues the commission determines.

14 (g) Promote the import and processing of critical minerals and
15 other strategic resources essential to this state's mobility and
16 electronics sectors.

17 (h) Facilitate bilateral partnerships in automotive and
18 mobility innovation, including electric vehicle technology and
19 smart infrastructure development.

20 (i) Support the importation, packaging, and distribution of
21 agricultural products, such as sesame, cassava, coffee, tea,
22 vanilla, fish, and cashews, to create new supply chains and food
23 industry jobs in this state.

24 (j) Encourage digital trade and cooperation in emerging
25 information technologies, including fintech, AI, and remote
26 workforce development.

27 (k) Advance IT collaborations in fintech, e-commerce, and
28 remote education.

29 (l) Leverage this state's logistics infrastructure, including

1 ports, rail, and air cargo, to increase bilateral trade flow.

2 (13) The commission shall report any findings and results
3 collected in the immediately previous year and recommendations to
4 the governor and the legislature by February 1, 2026, and each
5 February 1 thereafter. The report described in this subsection must
6 include the following information:

7 (a) Total bilateral trade volume increase.

8 (b) Number of Michigan-based jobs created.

9 (c) Number of African businesses engaged.

10 (d) Number of Caribbean businesses engaged.

11 (e) Volume and value of critical mineral, mobility, agro-
12 product, and IT trade.

13 (f) New public-private partnerships formed.

14 (14) The commission is authorized to raise funds, through
15 direct solicitation or other fund-raising events, alone or with
16 other groups, and accept gifts, grants, and bequests from
17 individuals, corporations, foundations, governmental agencies,
18 public and private organizations, and institutions, to minimize the
19 commission's administrative expenses and to carry out its purposes
20 as set forth in this act.

21 (15) The Michigan-African-Caribbean trade commission fund is
22 created in the state treasury. The state treasurer shall deposit
23 funds, gifts, grants, and bequests received under subsection (14)
24 in the fund. The state treasurer shall direct the investment of
25 money in the fund and credit interest and earnings from the
26 investments to the fund. The department of treasury is the
27 administrator of the fund for audits of the fund. Money in the fund
28 at the close of the fiscal year does not lapse to the general fund.
29 The department of treasury shall expend money from the fund on an

1 annual basis upon appropriation only to minimize the commission's
2 administrative expenses and to enable the commission to carry out
3 its purposes as set forth in this act.

4 (16) The commission shall identify and support initiatives
5 that promote job creation in this state and internationally through
6 bilateral trade activities. Priority must be given to projects that
7 lead to the establishment of local processing facilities,
8 distribution centers, digital platforms, and advanced manufacturing
9 partnerships.

10 (17) As used in this section:

11 (a) "Commission" means the Michigan-African-Caribbean trade
12 commission created under subsection (1).

13 (b) "Fund" means the Michigan-African-Caribbean trade
14 commission fund created under subsection (15).