

REGIONAL ENTITIES CONSISTING--OF--2-OR-MORE-COUNTIES,-INCLUDING BALTIMORE-CITY.

(6) PARTICIPATE, WHERE APPROPRIATE, AND IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTHER UNITS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, AND ANY OTHER STATE AGENCIES OR DEPARTMENTS, IN MARYLAND OVERSEAS OFFICES TO PROVIDE INFORMATIONAL AND MARKETING SERVICES TO SUPPORT INTERNATIONAL TRADE EFFORTS OF THE OFFICE.

(7) ASSIST LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND OTHER ENTITIES IN THE MARKETING AND DEVELOPMENT OF FOREIGN TRADE ZONES FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE.

(8) ENGAGE IN ANY OTHER ACTIVITY REASONABLY NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE THE PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION.

(C) (1) THE OFFICE SHALL HAVE THE PERSONNEL AND FUNDING AS PROVIDED IN THE STATE BUDGET. THE SECRETARY OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE SECRETARY OF PERSONNEL, SHALL ESTABLISH THOSE POSITIONS, TECHNICAL OR PROFESSIONAL IN NATURE, THAT SHALL BE UNCLASSIFIED.

(2) THE OFFICE HAS AUTHORITY TO CONTRACT OR MAKE GRANTS CONSISTENT WITH THE PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION. ALL CONTRACTS AND GRANTS SHALL BE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE SECRETARY OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OR THE SECRETARY'S DESIGNEE. PROCUREMENTS FOR SERVICES OR SUPPLIES TO BE PERFORMED OR DELIVERED OUTSIDE THE STATE SHALL BE CONSISTENT WITH, BUT NOT SUBJECT TO, THE PURPOSES OR REQUIREMENTS OF THE STATE FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT ARTICLE.

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(A) THERE IS A STATE TRADE POLICY COUNCIL ESTABLISHED TO:

(1) ADVISE THE GOVERNOR AND THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON POLICIES CONCERNING THE STATE'S ROLE IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE, INCLUDING THE INITIATION OF NEW PROGRAMS OR STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE OPPORTUNITIES FOR MARYLAND CITIZENS.

(2) FOSTER COORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PUBLIC ENTITIES AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVED IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE;

(3) SPONSOR AN ANNUAL CONFERENCE TO FACILITATE THE DISCUSSION OF ISSUES AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE;

(4) EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF STATE AND LOCAL PROGRAMS DESIGNED PRIMARILY TO PROMOTE OR ASSIST IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THEIR CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT; AND