



MINUTES

International Relations Committee

Thursday, January 16, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Annette Sweeney, Vice Chairperson
Senator Kevin Alons
Senator Jesse Green

Representative Eddie Andrews, Chairperson
Representative Ken Croken
Representative Jon Dunwell
Representative Ruth Ann Gaines
Representative Thomas D. Gerhold
Representative Helena Hayes
Representative Barb Kniff McCulla
Representative Elinor A. Levin
Representative Mary Lee Madison
Representative Mark I. Thompson

LSA CONTACTS: Organizational staffing and minutes provided by: Joseph McEniry, Division Administrator, Legal Services Division, Legislative Services Agency, 515.210.2298

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I. Procedural Business

Background and Charge. The International Relations Committee was created by the Legislative Council in 1992. The committee's charge is as follows: develop goals and procedures that will facilitate international communication between the Iowa General Assembly and foreign governments on several different levels, including but not limited to interpersonal interaction between state legislators and legislative staff and foreign visitors, instruction about state and local democratic institutions, and the development of trade in foreign markets.

Call to Order and Adjournment. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Andrews at 11:02 a.m. on Thursday, January 16, 2025, in Room 103 of the State Capitol Building. The meeting adjourned at 11:57 a.m.

Approval of Minutes. The committee adopted the minutes from the April 15, 2024, meeting.

Opening Remarks. Chairperson Andrews provided opening remarks and the members of the committee introduced themselves.

II. Iowa National Guard

Brigadier General Mark Kappelmann, Iowa National Guard, provided background about the State Partnership Program of the Iowa National Guard. The State Partnership Program is a joint program of the United States Department of Defense and the individual states, aimed at assisting and increasing ties with the defense forces of other countries. The Iowa National Guard currently has a partnership with the country of Kosovo, but is currently looking to partner with another country.

III. Legislative Information Office

Ms. Kelsie Willert, Legislative Information Officer, Legislative Information Office, discussed the various gifts available in the gift shop for legislators to present to international visitors. She distributed the approval form for the retrieval of gifts for international visitors from the gift shop, and distributed a list of gifts available in the international relations gift inventory. Chairperson Andrews emphasized that presenting gifts to international visitors is important and not presenting gifts is considered rude in many cultures. Discussion ensued about international travel and ideas for future meetings.

IV. Materials Filed with the Legislative Services Agency

The following materials were distributed at or in connection with the meeting and are filed with the Legislative Services Agency. The materials may be accessed from the link on the committee's website: www.legis.iowa.gov/committees/committee?groupID=661&ga=91.

1. International Relations Inventory
2. Prior Approval Gift Form