

Public Law 105-348
105th Congress

Joint Resolution

Nov. 2, 1998
[S.J. Res. 51]

Granting the consent of Congress to the Potomac Highlands Airport Authority Compact entered into between the States of Maryland and West Virginia.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. CONGRESSIONAL CONSENT.

Congress hereby consents to the Potomac Highlands Airport Authority Compact entered into between the States of Maryland and West Virginia. The compact reads substantially as follows:

“Potomac Highlands Airport Authority Compact

“SECTION 1. COUNTY COMMISSIONS EMPOWERED TO ENTER INTO INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENTS RELATING TO CUMBERLAND MUNICIPAL AIRPORT.

“The county commissions of Mineral County, West Virginia, and of other West Virginia counties contiguous to Mineral County, and the governing bodies of municipal corporations situated in those counties, may enter into intergovernmental agreements with this State, Allegany County, Maryland, other Maryland counties contiguous to Allegany County and Cumberland, Maryland, and other municipal corporations situated in those Maryland counties, and with the Potomac Highlands Airport Authority regarding the operation and use of the Cumberland Municipal Airport situated in Mineral County, West Virginia. The agreements shall be reciprocal in nature and may include, but are not limited to, conditions governing the operation, use, and maintenance of airport facilities, taxation of aircraft owned by Maryland residents and others, and user fees.

“SEC. 2. POTOMAC HIGHLANDS AIRPORT AUTHORITY AUTHORIZED.

“The county commissions of Mineral County, West Virginia, and of other West Virginia counties contiguous to Mineral County, and the governing bodies of municipal corporations situated in those counties, or any one or more of them, jointly and severally, may create and establish, with proper governmental units of this State, Allegany County, Maryland, other Maryland counties contiguous to Allegany County, and Cumberland, Maryland, and other municipal corporations situated in those Maryland counties, or any one or more of them, a public agency to be known as the ‘Potomac Highlands Airport Authority’ in the manner and for the purposes set forth in this Compact.

“SEC. 3. AUTHORITY A CORPORATION.

“When created, the Authority and the members of the Authority shall constitute a public corporation and, as such, shall have perpetual succession, may contract and be contracted with, sue and be sued, and have and use a common seal.

“SEC. 4. PURPOSES.

“The Authority may acquire, equip, maintain, and operate an airport or landing field and appurtenant facilities in Mineral County, on the Potomac River near Ridgeley, West Virginia, to serve the area in which it is located.

“SEC. 5. MEMBERS OF AUTHORITY.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The management and control of the Potomac Highlands Airport Authority, its property, operations, business, and affairs, shall be lodged in a board of seven or more persons who shall be known as members of the Authority and who shall be appointed for terms of three years each by those counties, municipal corporations, or other governmental units situated in West Virginia and Maryland as contribute to the funds of the Authority, in such proportion between those States and counties, municipal corporations, and units, and in whatever manner, as may from time to time be provided in the bylaws adopted by the Authority.

“(b) FIRST BOARD.—The first board shall be appointed as follows:

“(1) The County Commission of Mineral County shall appoint two members for terms of two and three years, respectively.

“(2) The governing official or body of the municipal corporation of Cumberland, Maryland, shall appoint three members for terms of one, two, and three years, respectively.

“(3) The governing official or body of Allegany County, Maryland, shall appoint two members for terms of one and two years, respectively.

“SEC. 6. POWERS.

“The Potomac Highlands Airport Authority has power and authority as follows:

“(1) To make and adopt all necessary bylaws, rules, and regulations for its organization and operations not inconsistent with law.

“(2) To take all legal actions necessary or desirable in relation to the general operation, governance, capital expansion, management, and protection of the Cumberland Municipal Airport.

“(3) To increase the number of members of the Authority, and to set the terms of office and appointment procedures for those additional members.

“(4) To elect its own officers, to appoint committees, and to employ and fix the compensation for personnel necessary for its operation.

“(5) To enter into contracts with any person, firm, or corporation, and generally to do anything necessary for the purpose of acquiring, equipping, expanding, maintaining, and operating an airport.

“(6) To delegate any authority given to it by law to any of its officers, committees, agents, or employees.

“(7) To apply for, receive, and use grants in aid, donations, and contributions from any sources.

“(8) To take or acquire lands by purchase, holding title to it in its own name.

“(9) To purchase, own, hold, sell, and dispose of personal property and to sell and dispose of any real estate which it may have acquired and may determine not to be needed for its purposes.

“(10) To borrow money.

“(11) To extend its funds in the execution of the powers and authority hereby given.

“(12) To take all necessary steps to provide for proper police protection at the airport.

“(13) To inventory airplanes and other personal property at the airport and provide the assessor of Mineral County and other proper governmental officials with full particulars in regard to the inventory.

“SEC. 7. PARTICIPATION BY WEST VIRGINIA.

“(a) APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS; CONTRIBUTION TO COSTS.—The county commissions of Mineral County and of counties contiguous to Mineral County, and the governing bodies of municipal corporations situated in those counties, or any one or more of them, jointly and severally, may appoint members of the Authority and contribute to the cost of acquiring, equipping, maintaining, and operating the airport and appurtenant facilities.

“(b) TRANSFER OF PROPERTY.—Any of the foregoing county commissions or municipal corporations may transfer and convey to the Authority property of any kind acquired previously by the county commission or municipal corporation for airport purposes.

“SEC. 8. FUNDS AND ACCOUNTS.

“(a) CONTRIBUTION AND DEPOSIT OF FUNDS.—Contributions may be made to the Authority from time to time by the various bodies contributing to its funds and shall be deposited in whatever bank or banks a majority of the members of the Authority direct and may be withdrawn from them in whatever manner the Authority directs.

“(b) ACCOUNTS AND REPORTS.—The Authority shall keep strict account of all of its receipts and expenditures and shall make quarterly reports to the public and private bodies contributing to its funds, containing an itemized account of its operations in the preceding quarter. The accounts of the Authority shall be regularly examined by the State Tax Commissioner in the manner required by Article nine, Chapter six of the Code of West Virginia.

“SEC. 9. PROPERTY AND OBLIGATIONS OF AUTHORITY EXEMPT FROM TAXATION.

“The Authority is exempt from the payment of any taxes or fees to the State of West Virginia or any subdivisions of that State or to any officer or employee of the State or other subdivision of it. The property of the Authority is exempt from all local and municipal taxes. Notes, debentures, and other evidence of indebtedness of the Authority are declared to be issued for a public purpose and to be public instrumentalities, and, together with interest on them, are exempt from taxes.

“SEC. 10. SALE OR LEASE OF PROPERTY.

“In the event all of the public corporations contributing to the funds of the Authority so determine, the Authority shall make sale of all of its properties and assets and distribute the proceeds of the sale among those contributing to its funds. In the alternative, if such of the supporting corporations contributing a majority of the funds of the Authority so determine, the Authority may lease all of its property and equipment upon whatever terms and conditions the Authority may fix and determine.

“SEC. 11. EMPLOYEES TO BE COVERED BY WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION.

“All eligible employees of the Authority are considered to be within the Workmen's Compensation Act of West Virginia, and premiums on their compensation shall be paid by the Authority as required by law.

“SEC. 12. LIBERAL CONSTRUCTION OF COMPACT.

“It is the purpose of this Compact to provide for the maintenance and operation of an airport in a prudent and economical manner, and this Compact shall be liberally construed as giving to the Authority full and complete power reasonably required to give effect to the purposes hereof. The provisions of this Compact are in addition to and not in derogation of any power existing in the county commissions and municipal corporations herein named under any constitutional, statutory, or charter provisions which they or any of them may now have or may hereafter acquire or adopt.”.

SEC. 2. RIGHT TO ALTER, AMEND, OR REPEAL.

The right to alter, amend, or repeal this joint resolution is hereby expressly reserved. The consent granted by this joint resolution shall not be construed as impairing or in any manner affecting any right or jurisdiction of the United States in and over the region which forms the subject of the compact.

Approved November 2, 1998.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S.J. Res. 51:

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 144 (1998):

July 31, considered and passed Senate.

Oct. 8, considered and passed House.