the Port of Everett, Washington. The Port, in cooperation with the City of Everett, the City of Mukilteo, the Washington State Department of Transportation, Sound Transit, and the Washington State Ferry System, plans to redevelop the site to include a new ferry terminal, commuter rail, a marina and enhanced shoreline access. This redevelopement will revitalize Mukilteo while improving the transportation in this area. An important first step in implementing these development plans is for the Air Force to convey this property to the Port of Everett.

For almost 30 years, the 22 acre parcel of land has also been home to the National Marine Fisheries Service’s, NMFS, Mukilteo Field Research Facility. Its laboratories are currently housed in old, run-down military barracks. Nearly 20 acres of the property went to NMFS. The agency was concerned that it had lost its chance to own a portion of the 22 acres, and thus to make significant improvements to the site. The facility conducts valuable marine research, which will lead to improved long-term success in protecting and restoring salmon, groundfish and other species in Puget Sound.

I directed the parties involved to reach a mutually agreeable solution. I am very pleased to announce that today’s amendment reflects an agreement between the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NOAA, NMFS and the Port of Everett. Upon transfer of the 22 acres, the Air Force will convey 1.1 acres to NOAA. After 12 years, any portion of the 1.1 acres not being used by NOAA shall automatically revert to the Port of Everett. In addition, the Secretary of Commerce will have the authority to exchange portions of the 1.1 acres with the Port of Everett should such an exchange be deemed mutually agreeable.

This amendment reflects almost a year of negotiations and hard work on the part of many people within each organization. I would like to thank John Mohr, Executive Director for the Port of Everett, and Donna Darm, Acting Regional Administrator for NMFS in the Northwestern Region. I appreciate their outstanding leadership in crafting this agreement. I look forward to continuing to work with the Port of Everett, NMFS and NOAA on this and any other issue that may arise in the future. Congratulations on working out an agreement which, I believe, is in the best interest of the community, the state of Washington and the nation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina is recognized.

Mr. HOLLINGS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the aviation legislation sometime shortly, but it was in the interest of accommodating Senators who wish to speak that I thought it would be appropriate for us now to enter into a period for morning business. We will do that and be back on the floor with the request in the not too distant future. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Who seeks recognition? The Senator from South Carolina.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 1447

Mr. HOLLINGS. Madam President, I understand that a settlement has been reached between the House and Senate relative to the airline assistance measure. This measure, an attempt to propound a bare bones solution, does not encompass all the main considerations that came out of the hearing we had in the Commerce Committee yesterday. It is more or less a gentlemen’s agreement that safety is just as important, or this particular Senator was trying to get safety and security ahead of money. Be that as it may, the money has prevailed and the bill will pass, perhaps this weekend or perhaps this afternoon. I want to save time by speaking now so that when the bill is under consideration, I will not be holding up my colleagues who are trying to catch transportation to get home for the weekend.

In that light, I have at the desk a bill by myself, Senator MCCAIN, Senator KERRY, Senator ROCKEFELLER, Senator HARKIN, Senator BREAUX, Senator CLELAND, Senator NELSON, Senator EDWARDS, Senator BURNS, Senator SMITH, and Senator REID. I ask it be given its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows: