

2007 SESSION

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 688

Directing the Joint Commission on Technology and Science to study the development and utilization of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport. Report.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 2, 2007

Agreed to by the Senate, February 21, 2007

WHEREAS, under the direction of the Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority, the federal government is currently sponsoring and funding a study on the expansion of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport into a next generation commercial cargo spaceport; and

WHEREAS, such study will be completed by October 1, 2007; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that the private and public space launch industry will reach \$1 billion in annual revenue by 2020, mostly attributed to suborbital commercial tourism and cargo flights; and

WHEREAS, with the growth of the International Space Station and future planned missions to the Moon and Mars, NASA is contracting with private companies and authorities for cargo and resupply missions to the international space station; and

WHEREAS, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport, located on Wallops Island, is licensed by the Federal Aviation Administration to perform commercial orbital and suborbital launches; and

WHEREAS, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport's proximity to several suborbital and orbital commercial and governmental launch companies, horizontal runways, and vertical launch pad infrastructure, and leased real estate for expansion gives the spaceport a competitive advantage in attracting launch business; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Joint Commission on Technology and Science be directed to study the development and utilization of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport.

In conducting its study, the Joint Commission on Technology and Science shall (i) identify any federal or state regulatory impediments, including taxation, to the development of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport; (ii) identify threats to the spaceport's viability, such as encroachment, zoning, mineral exploration and exploitation, and noncompatible uses of the spaceport; (iii) identify potential economic development opportunities and marketing strategies to attract launch companies to Virginia; (iv) identify potential state legal barriers to human spaceflight, including liability and assumption of risk issues; (v) identify specific areas where the Commonwealth needs to invest in infrastructure and marketing to enable the achievement of the spaceport's full potential; and (vi) develop a long-term strategic plan to make the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport the premiere commercial hub for space travel in the United States.

In its deliberations, the Commission shall provide for the contributions and participation of representatives of the aerospace, suborbital, or orbital launch industries, the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development, the Secretary of Technology, Secretary of Commerce and Trade, Secretary of Finance, Executive Director of the Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority, and Executive Director of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership or their designees. These persons shall contribute to and participate in the study in the manner deemed appropriate by the Commission in the furtherance of its work.

All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Joint Commission on Technology and Science for this study, upon request.

The Joint Commission on Technology and Science shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2007, and the chairman shall submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary of its findings and recommendations no later than the first day of the 2008 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The executive summary shall state whether the Joint Commission on Technology and Science intends to submit to the General Assembly and the Governor a report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a House or Senate document. The executive summary and report shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

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