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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 380

Offered January 10, 2007

Prefiled January 9, 2007

Establishing a joint subcommittee to study the enhanced development of cargo, space exploration, and space tourism at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport. Report.

Patron—Rerras

Referred to Committee on Rules

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 a joint subcommittee be established to study the enhanced development of cargo, space exploration, and space tourism at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport. The joint subcommittee shall have a total membership of 19 members that shall consist of eight legislative members, six nonlegislative citizen members, and five ex officio members. Members shall be appointed as follows: five members of the House of Delegates to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates in accordance with the principles of proportional representation contained in the Rules of the House of Delegates; three members of the Senate to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules; three nonlegislative citizen members representing the aerospace, suborbital, or orbital launch industries and one representative from the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates; and two nonlegislative citizen members representing the aerospace, suborbital, or orbital launch industries to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules. 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 shall serve ex officio with voting privileges. Unless otherwise approved in writing by the chairman of the joint subcommittee and the respective Clerk, nonlegislative citizen members shall be reimbursed only for travel originating and ending within the Commonwealth of Virginia for the purpose of attending meetings. If a companion joint resolution of the other chamber is agreed to, written authorization of both Clerks shall be required. The joint subcommittee shall elect a chairman and vice chairman from among its membership who shall be members of the General Assembly.

In conducting its study, the joint subcommittee 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 in order 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.

Administrative staff support shall be provided by the Office of the Clerk of the House of Delegates. Legal, research, policy analysis, and other services as requested by the joint subcommittee shall be provided by the Division of Legislative Services. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the joint subcommittee for this study, upon request.

The joint subcommittee shall be limited to four meetings for the 2007 interim, and the direct costs of

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this study shall not exceed $10,400 without approval as set out in this resolution. Approval for unbudgeted nonmember-related expenses shall require the written authorization of the chairman of the joint subcommittee and the respective Clerk. If a companion joint resolution of the other chamber is agreed to, written authorization of both Clerks shall be required.

No recommendation of the joint subcommittee shall be adopted if a majority of the House members or a majority of the Senate members appointed to the joint subcommittee (i) vote against the recommendation and (ii) vote for the recommendation to fail notwithstanding the majority vote of the joint subcommittee.

The joint subcommittee 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 subcommittee 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 the 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.

Implementation of this resolution is subject to subsequent approval and certification by the Joint Rules Committee. The Committee may approve or disapprove expenditures for this study, extend or delay the period for the conduct of the study, or authorize additional meetings during the 2007 interim.