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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 289

Offered January 18, 1995

Establishing a joint subcommittee to study financing mechanisms for the expansion of the Richmond International Airport.

Patrons—Martin, Benedetti, Lambert, Marsh and Stosch; Delegates: Ball, Callahan, Cantor, Cox, Cunningham, Hall, Jones, D.C., Marshall, Nixon, Reid and Watkins

Referred to the Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the Capital Regional Airport Commission ("Commission") is a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia, created by Chapter 380, as amended, of the Acts of Assembly of 1980; and

WHEREAS, the commissioners are appointed by participating political subdivisions, which currently include the City of Richmond, and the Counties of Chesterfield, Hanover and Henrico; and

WHEREAS, the Commission, as the owner and operator of Richmond International Airport, provides facilities and services through five major airlines and six regional and commuter airlines to serve the central Virginia region with respect to air transportation; and

WHEREAS, the dramatic growth in population and the sharp increase in passengers and cargo at Richmond International Airport have produced unforeseen opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the recent unparalleled economic growth in the central Virginia region is now facing increased competition from areas seeking similar economic growth and vitality elsewhere in the United States; and

WHEREAS, states and regions are in increased and direct competition for trade and investment, and Virginia's local governments alone do not have the necessary resources, financial and otherwise, to meet this competition; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth and local governments must join with the private sector to form an integrated, public-private partnership to lay out a strategic economic development plan for the region; and

WHEREAS, the Commission, in updating its master plan, has concluded that there are numerous airfield, terminal, and air cargo improvements necessary to meet competition and to provide the central Virginia region with a high level of safe air service; and

WHEREAS, the improvements, which consist of adding taxiways, extending runways, expanding the terminal, and constructing additional air cargo aprons and air cargo buildings, are necessary to provide for the safe and efficient flow of passengers as well as for the increased level of air service to serve the growing central Virginia region; and

WHEREAS, the preliminary cost estimates of these short range improvements amount to approximately \$225 million with a shortfall of approximately \$78 million to be made up from potential additional funding sources including local government funding and supplementary state funding; and

WHEREAS, a one-time investment of state funds is necessary to carry out the elements of the master plan which would take Richmond International Airport from one operational plateau to another in a relatively short time thereby providing the Commonwealth with the benefit of increased employment, a permanent increase in the tax base, and an improved air transportation facility; and

WHEREAS, it would be appropriate for a special study commission of the Virginia General Assembly to study the benefits of the proposed capital improvements at the Richmond International Airport and to recommend a source of state funding to assist in providing the necessary improvements at the airport for consideration by the General Assembly in preparing the Commonwealth's next biennial budget; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That a joint subcommittee studying financing mechanisms for the expansion of the Richmond International Airport be established to make a recommendation regarding a source of state funding to assist in making improvements at the airport. The joint subcommittee shall be composed of seven members as follows: one member from the Senate Committee on Finance and one member from the Senate Committee in Local Government to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; one member from the House Committee on Finance and one member from the House Committee on Counties, Cities and Towns to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; two Commissioners from the Capital Regional Airport Commission to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; and a member of the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections.

The direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$3,600.

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60 The House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees shall provide staff support for the study.
61 Technical assistance shall be provided by the Division of Legislative Services. All agencies of the
62 Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the joint subcommittee, upon request.
63 The joint subcommittee shall complete its work in time to submit its findings and recommendations
64 to the Governor and the 1996 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the
65 Division of Legislative Automated Systems for processing legislative documents.
66 Implementation of this resolution is subject to subsequent approval and certification by the Joint
67 Rules Committee. The Committee may withhold expenditures or delay the period for the conduct of the
68 study.