

1 HB207
2 216900-1
3 By Representative South
4 RFD: Ways and Means General Fund
5 First Read: 02-FEB-22

SYNOPSIS: This bill would create the Alabama Airport Economic and Infrastructure Program within the Alabama Department of Transportation, to issue grants for improvements to airports and to fund efforts to grow and expand commercial air service in Alabama.

 This bill would provide for the proportion of funds that would be awarded to general aviation airports and commercial service airports under the program.

A BILL
TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

 Relating to airports; to create the Alabama Airport Economic and Infrastructure Program, to fund and pay debt service for improvements to general aviation airports and commercial service airports and to fund efforts to grow and expand commercial air service in Alabama.

1 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

2 Section 1. The Legislature of Alabama finds and
3 declares the following:

4 (1) The State of Alabama has within its borders 78
5 airports; six of these provide services for commercial
6 flights, and 72 are general aviation airports.

7 (2) The airports in Alabama altogether require
8 approximately \$134.1 million in annual funding, \$59.3 million
9 of which is necessary solely for airport pavement funding,
10 according to the Alabama Department of Transportation
11 Aeronautics Bureau and the Airports Council International -
12 North America.

13 (3) Alabama receives approximately \$56 million
14 annually in grants from the Federal Aviation Administration
15 Federal Airport Improvement Program; to match these funds,
16 Alabama must commit approximately \$3.1 million.

17 (4) Other states that have an airport grant program
18 include, but are not limited to: Mississippi, with \$5 million
19 annually; North Carolina, with \$30 million for general
20 aviation airports and \$75 million for commercial service
21 airports; and Wyoming, with \$15 million for commercial air
22 service development.

23 Section 2. For purposes of this act, the following
24 terms shall have the following meanings:

25 (1) COMMERCIAL SERVICE AIRPORT. As defined in 49
26 U.S.C. § 47102.

1 (2) DEPARTMENT. The Alabama Department of
2 Transportation.

3 (3) DIRECTOR. The Director of Transportation for the
4 Alabama Department of Transportation.

5 (4) GENERAL AVIATION AIRPORT. As defined in 49
6 U.S.C. § 47102.

7 (5) IMPROVEMENT. The acquiring, engineering,
8 construction, or maintenance of existing or proposed airports
9 and other air navigation facilities within the state.

10 (6) PROGRAM. The Alabama Airport Economic and
11 Infrastructure Program.

12 Section 3. There is established the Alabama Airport
13 Economic and Infrastructure Program under the Alabama
14 Department of Transportation. The purpose of the program shall
15 be the following:

16 (1) To fund improvements to general aviation
17 airports and commercial service airports.

18 (2) To pay debt service for improvements to general
19 aviation airports and commercial service airports.

20 (3) To fund efforts to grow and expand commercial
21 air service in Alabama.

22 Section 4. (a) The director or his or her designee
23 may award grants to general aviation and commercial service
24 airports to fund improvements, pay debt service for
25 improvements, or fund efforts to grow and expand commercial
26 aviation service in Alabama.

1 (b) Awards made under subsection (a) shall comply
2 with the following:

3 (1) Forty percent of the amount appropriated to the
4 program in a fiscal year shall be awarded to general aviation
5 airports.

6 (2) Sixty percent of the amount appropriated to the
7 program in a fiscal year shall be awarded to commercial
8 service airports. Grants to commercial service airports shall
9 be allocated based on the pro rata share of entitlement funds
10 received by each airport under the federal Airport Improvement
11 Program for the preceding fiscal year.

12 (3) The total amount of the grants awarded under
13 this act in any fiscal year may not exceed the amount
14 appropriated for the program for that fiscal year.

15 (c) (1) The director or his or her designee shall
16 establish a process to ensure that the grants are awarded
17 pursuant to subsection (a).

18 (2) The director or his or her designee shall ensure
19 that the grant funds awarded by the program are used solely
20 for the purposes specified in Section 3 of this act.

21 Section 5. The director may adopt rules to implement
22 and administer this act.

23 Section 6. This act shall become effective on the
24 first day of the third month following its passage and
25 approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.