ENGROSSED SENATE
BILL NO. 53

By: Capps and Coffee of the Senate

and

Piatt of the House

An Act relating to the Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission; amending 3 O.S. 2001, Section 85, as amended by Section 56, Chapter 329, O.S.L. 2003 (3 O.S. Supp. 2004, Section 85), which relates to the powers and duties of the Commission; eliminating exemption for certain Commission responsibilities relating to certain funds and monies for reliever airports; exempting Oklahoma Space Industry Development Authority airports from jurisdiction of the Commission for certain activities; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 3 O.S. 2001, Section 85, as amended by Section 56, Chapter 329, O.S.L. 2003 (3 O.S. Supp. 2004, Section 85), is amended to read as follows:

Section 85. A. The Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission and its Director acting under its authority is empowered and directed to encourage, foster, and assist in the development of aeronautics in this state and to encourage the establishment of airports and air navigation facilities. It shall cooperate with and assist the federal government, the municipalities of this state, and other persons in the development of aeronautics, and shall seek to coordinate the aeronautical activities of these bodies and persons. Municipalities are authorized to cooperate with the Commission in the development of aeronautics and aeronautical facilities in this state.

B. The Commission may organize and administer a voluntary program of air-age education in cooperation with the schools, colleges, and for the general public, and may prepare and conduct

voluntary flight clinics for airmen and issue such bulletins and publications as may be required.

C. The Commission shall assist in all aeronautical matters related to emergency management actions in conformance with federal directions and with the Emergency Operations Plan of the state.

D. The Commission may establish air markers throughout the state.

E. The Commission may purchase and install roadside signs directing highway traffic to airports, subject to approval of the State Transportation Commission.

F. The Commission shall:

1. Draft and recommend necessary legislation to advance the interests of the state in aeronautics;

2. Represent the state in aeronautical matters before federal agencies and other state agencies; and

3. Participate as party plaintiff or defendant or as intervener on behalf of the state or any municipality or citizen thereof in any proceeding which involves the interest of the state in aeronautics.

G. 1. The Commission may, insofar as is reasonably possible, make available its engineering and other technical services to any municipality or person desiring them in connection with the planning, acquisition, construction, improvement, maintenance, or operation of airports or navigation facilities.

2. The Commission may render financial assistance by grant or loan or both to any municipality or municipalities acting jointly in the planning, acquisition, construction, improvement, maintenance, or operation of an airport owned or controlled, or to be owned or controlled, by such municipality or municipalities, out of appropriations or other monies made available by the Legislature for such purposes. Such financial assistance may be furnished in connection with federal or other financial aid for the same purposes.

3. The Commission shall be designated as the agent of this state or political subdivision of this state for the purpose of applying for, receiving, administering and disbursing federal funds and other public monies for the benefit of general aviation airports, ~~except reliever airports,~~ as may be available under applicable federal law or other laws. If requested by a political subdivision, the Commission may act as its or their agent in contracting for and supervising such planning, acquisition, construction, improvement, maintenance, or operation; and all political subdivisions are authorized to designate the Commission as their agent for the foregoing purposes. The Commission, as principal on behalf of the state, may enter into any contracts with the United States or with any person, which may be required in connection with a grant or loan of federal monies for municipal airport or air navigation facility purposes. All federal monies accepted under this section shall be accepted and transferred or expended by the Commission upon such terms and conditions as are prescribed by the United States. All monies received by the Commission pursuant to this section shall be deposited in the Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission Fund in the State Treasury and shall be paid out by the Commission in accordance with the terms and conditions of any agreement entered into under the provisions of this section.

H. 1. The Commission is authorized on behalf of and in the name of the state, out of appropriations and other monies made available for such purposes, to plan, zone, establish, construct, enlarge, improve, maintain, equip, operate, regulate, protect, and police airports and air navigation facilities, either within or without the state, including the construction, installation, equipping, maintenance, and operation at such airports of buildings and other facilities for the servicing of aircraft or for the comfort and accommodation of air travelers. However, the regulatory

authority shall not extend to any airman employed by, nor to any aeronautics facility or aircraft under the exclusive possession, operation, or control of, a person holding a certificate of public convenience and necessity issued by any agency of the United States to operate as a common carrier by air of persons and/or property in interstate commerce. For such purposes the Commission may, by purchase, gift, devise, or lease, acquire property, real or personal, or any interest therein including easements in aeronautical hazards or land outside the boundaries of an airport or airport site, as are necessary to permit safe and efficient operation of the state airports or to permit the removal, elimination, obstruction-marking or obstruction-lighting of airport hazards, or to prevent the establishment of airport hazards. In like manner the Commission may acquire existing airports and air navigation facilities. However, the Commission shall not acquire or take over any airport or air navigation facility owned or controlled by a municipality of this or any other state without the consent of such municipality. The Commission may, by sale, lease, or otherwise, dispose of any such property, airport, air navigation facility, or portion thereof or interest therein. The disposal, by sale, lease, or otherwise, shall be in accordance with the laws of this state governing the disposition of other property of the state, except that, in the case of disposals to any municipality or state government or the United States for aeronautical purposes incident thereto, the sale, lease, or other disposal may be effected in such manner and upon such terms as the Commission may deem in the best interest of the state.

2. All airports owned by the state shall be within the primary jurisdiction of the State Aeronautics Commission for purposes of design, development, and operation; provided, that airports owned and operated by the Oklahoma Space Industry Development Authority shall be exempt from such provisions, and during the time of a

national emergency the Air National Guard shall be exempt from such provisions ~~during time of a national emergency~~, and provided further, that any airport owned by the state may be leased by the Commission to a public or private agency, as it may deem fit.

3. Nothing contained in this act shall be construed to limit any right, power, or authority of the state or a municipality to regulate airport hazards by zoning.

4. The Commission may exercise any powers granted by this section jointly with any municipalities or with the United States.

5. a. In operating an airport or air navigation facility owned or controlled by the state, the Commission may enter into contracts, leases, and other arrangements for a term not exceeding twenty-five (25) years with any persons granting the privilege of using or improving such airport or air navigation facility or any portion or facility thereof or space therein for commercial purposes; conferring the privilege of supplying goods, commodities, things, services, or facilities at such airport or air navigation facility; or making available services to be furnished by the Commission or its agents at such airport or air navigation facility.

In each such case the Commission may establish the terms and conditions and fix the charges, rentals, or fees for the privileges or services, which shall be reasonable and uniform for the same class of privileges or services and shall be established with due regard to the property and improvements used and the expenses of operation to the state; provided, that in no case shall the public be deprived of its rightful, equal, and uniform use of the airport, air navigation facility or portion or facility thereof.

b. The Commission may by contract, lease, or other arrangement, upon a consideration fixed by it, grant to any qualified person for a term not to exceed twenty-five (25) years the privilege of operating, as agent of the state or otherwise, any airport owned or controlled by the state; provided, that no such person shall be granted any authority to operate the airport other than as a public airport or to enter into any contracts, leases, or other arrangements in connection with the operation of the airport which the Commission might not have undertaken under subparagraph a of this paragraph.

c. To enforce the payment of any charges for repairs to, or improvements, storage, or care of, any personal property made or furnished by the Commission or its agents in connection with the operation of an airport or air navigation facility owned or operated by the state, the state shall have liens on such property, which shall be enforceable by the Commission as provided by law.

6. In accepting federal monies under this section, the Commission shall have the same authority to enter into contracts on behalf of the state as is granted to the Commission under subsection G of this section with respect to federal monies accepted on behalf of municipalities. All monies received by the Commission pursuant to this section shall be deposited in the Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission Fund in the State Treasury and shall be paid out of the Commission Fund in accordance with the terms and conditions of any agreement entered into under the provisions of this section.

7. The Commission shall grant no exclusive right for the use of any airport or air navigation facility under its jurisdiction. This

shall not be construed to prevent the making of contracts, leases, and other arrangements pursuant to subsection (h) of this section.

I. The Commission may enter into any contracts necessary to the execution of the powers granted it by this act. All contracts made by the Commission, either as the agent of the state or as the agent of any municipality, shall be made pursuant to the laws of the state governing the making of like contracts. When the planning, acquisition, construction, improvement, maintenance, or operation of any airport or air navigation facility is financed wholly or partially with federal monies, the Commission as agent of the state or of any municipality may let contracts in the manner prescribed by the federal authorities acting under the laws of the United States and any rules or regulations made thereunder.

J. 1. The Commission, the Director, or any officer or employee of the Commission designated by it shall have the power to hold investigations, inquiries, and hearings concerning matters covered by the provisions of this act and the rules, regulations, and orders of the Commission. Hearings shall be open to the public and shall be held upon such call or notice as the Commission shall deem advisable. Each member of the Commission, the Director, and every officer or employee of the Commission designated by it to hold any inquiry, investigation, or hearing shall have the power to administer oaths and affirmations, certify to all official acts, issue subpoenas, and order the attendance and testimony of witnesses and the production of papers, books, and documents. In case of the failure of any person to comply with any subpoena or order issued under the authority of this subsection, or on the refusal of any witness to testify to any matters regarding which he may be lawfully interrogated, it shall be the duty of the district court of any county or of the judge thereof, on application of the Commission or its authorized representative, to compel obedience by proceedings

for contempt, as in the case of disobedience of the requirements of a subpoena issued from such court or a refusal to testify therein.

2. In order to facilitate the making of investigations by the Commission in the interest of public safety and promotion of aeronautics the public interest requires, and it is therefore provided, that the reports of investigations or hearings, or any part thereof, shall not be admitted in evidence or used for any purpose in any suit, action, or proceeding growing out of any matter referred to in the investigation, hearing, or report thereof, except in case of any suit, action, or proceeding, civil or criminal, instituted by or in behalf of the Commission or in the name of the state under the provisions of this act or other laws of the state relating to aeronautics; nor shall any member of the Commission, or the Director, or any officer or employee of the Commission be required to testify to any facts ascertained in, or information gained by reason of, such person's official capacity, or be required to testify as an expert witness in any suit, action, or proceeding involving any aircraft. Subject to the foregoing provisions, the Commission may in its discretion make available to appropriate federal, state and municipal agencies information and material developed in the course of its investigations and hearings.

K. 1. The Commission is authorized to confer with or to hold joint hearings with any agency of the United States in connection with any matter arising under this act or relating to the sound development of aeronautics.

2. The Commission is authorized to avail itself of the cooperation, services, records, and facilities of the agencies of the United States as fully as may be practicable in the administration and enforcement of this act. The Commission shall furnish to the agencies of the United States its cooperation, services, records, and facilities, insofar as may be practicable.

3. The Commission shall report to the appropriate agency of the United States all accidents in aeronautics in this state of which it is informed and shall, insofar as is practicable, preserve, protect, and prevent the removal of the component parts of any aircraft involved in an accident being investigated by it until the federal agency institutes an investigation.

L. The Commission may organize and administer an aerospace education program in cooperation with universities, colleges and schools for the general public. The Commission may also plan and act jointly in a cooperative aviation research or high technology program. As part of these programs, the Commission may issue aviation communication films and publications.

SECTION 2. This act shall become effective July 1, 2005.

SECTION 3. It being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

Passed the Senate the 9th day of March, 2005.

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Presiding Officer of the Senate

Passed the House of Representatives the ____ day of _____, 2005.

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Presiding Officer of the House
of Representatives