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H.B. 477
135th General Assembly*

Bill Analysis

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Version: As Reported by House Aviation and Aerospace

Primary Sponsor: Rep. Willis

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SUMMARY

- Includes specific references to several locations used for the landing and takeoff of aircraft within Ohio Aeronautics Law by adding seaplane bases, heliports, vertiports, and spaceports to that Law.
- Incorporates the establishment, operation, maintenance, repair, and improvement of seaplane bases, heliports, vertiports, and spaceports into the meaning of aviation.
- Clarifies that the Ohio Department of Transportation must issue a certificate of approval before any seaplane base, heliport, vertiport, or spaceport may be used for commercial purposes.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Aeronautics

The bill includes specific references to several locations used for the landing and takeoff of aircraft within Ohio Aeronautics Law. Specifically, it defines seaplane bases, heliports, vertiports, and spaceports, and specifies that the establishment, operation, maintenance, repair, and improvement of seaplane bases, heliports, vertiports, and spaceports is encompassed within the meaning of aviation. By doing so, the bill separates these aviation facilities from the more general meaning of "airport," which includes *any* location on land or water that is used for the landing or takeoff of aircraft.¹

* This analysis was prepared before the report of the House Aviation and Aerospace Committee appeared in the House Journal. Note that the legislative history may be incomplete.

¹ R.C. 4561.01(A), (C), and (L) through (O).

Additionally, the bill clarifies that the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) must issue a certificate of approval for any seaplane base, heliport, vertiport, or spaceport before it is used for commercial purposes. Under current law, these facilities likely are already required to obtain the certificate of approval, but as a kind of airport or landing area, rather than as their more precise terms. The bill specifies that current laws applicable to ODOT's approval process for a commercial airport, landing field, and landing area apply to the approval process for the additional aviation facilities. Those current laws, which likely already apply, include requirements for filing complete plans for the facility, public access to the facility, information to be included with rejected applications, and appeals processes.²

The bill also changes an antiquated reference to the Civil Aeronautics Administration to its current successor, the Federal Aviation Administration.³

Aviation facilities

The aviation facilities defined by the bill are as follows:

- **Seaplane base** – a designated area of water used or intended to be used for the landing and takeoff of seaplanes, including shore side access and any appurtenant buildings and facilities.
- **Heliport** – the area of land, water, or a structure that is used or intended to be used for the landing and takeoff of helicopters, including any appurtenant buildings and facilities.
- **Vertiport** – the identifiable ground or elevated areas, including the facilities thereon, that are designed to be used for the landing and takeoff of rotorcraft, tilt-rotor aircraft, or other powered lift aircraft.
- **Spaceport** – any facility in Ohio at which space vehicles may be landed or launched, including all facilities and support infrastructure related to the launch, landing, and payload processing.⁴

HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	04-08-24
Reported, H. Aviation & Aerospace	---

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² R.C. 4561.11.

³ R.C. 4561.11(D)(1).

⁴ R.C. 4561.01(L) through (O).