



# MEDIA STATEMENT

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For Immediate Release

James Salmon  
302.571.6409

## **DRBA Accepts New Castle County's Resolution to Rescind Lease Termination Letter Regarding Wilmington Airport**

**NEW CASTLE, Del.** – Today, the Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA) unanimously authorized its executive leadership team to accept the New Castle County Council Resolution and subsequent notification that rescinds the Wilmington Airport Lease Termination Letter dated June 24, 2020. With the rescission of the letter, the DRBA will continue to be the Wilmington Airport Sponsor. The authorization took place at the bi-state agency's monthly Commission meeting held in the James Julian Boardroom.

"We're pleased that New Castle County leadership made the decision to rescind its termination letter of June 24, 2020, and reauthorize the Delaware River and Bay Authority to continue to be the sponsor of the Wilmington Airport for the next thirty years," said DRBA Commission Chairman Samuel E. Lathem. "We look forward to working together with the leadership and staff of New Castle County as we continue to seek opportunities to improve and develop the airport for the benefit of its stakeholders and customers."

"We appreciate New Castle County's decision to re-engage with us so we can build on the progress that has been sustained at Wilmington Airport over the past two decades," said DRBA Commission Vice Chairman James N. Hogan. "Like New Castle County, we are a public governmental entity, but our primary focus is not on education, parks, public safety or libraries. We're a local, fiscally sound organization with extensive experience in transportation related infrastructure. Our agreement with New Castle County to sponsor the airport must be viewed in the proper context; it's always been a government-to-government relationship that takes advantage of our unique experience and resources as a transportation agency."

"Today is a great day for the future of Wilmington Airport," said DRBA Executive Director Thomas J. Cook. "Initially, we were disappointed that New Castle County issued the lease termination letter, but we understood their responsibility, as the owner of Wilmington Airport, to seek the best possible arrangement for the citizens of New Castle County. Throughout this process, we made it clear that we valued our partnership with New Castle County. It always was our firm belief that the best outcome for the Airport, the citizens of New Castle County, the State of Delaware and its economy was for the DRBA to continue as the Airport Sponsor."

For nearly thirty years, the Authority's role was to manage, operate and develop the Airport while at the same time freeing the County and its taxpayers of all airport related expenses – including capital investment – that would be required to promote business growth and aviation success. Unlike most, if not all, other airport management organizations, the DRBA doesn't charge a management fee to be the Airport sponsor. With a family of five aviation facilities in the DRBA transportation network, the Authority possesses valued economies of scale, knowledge, and expertise to be an effective airport sponsor.

The DRBA looks forward to continued negotiations on new lease language to strengthen our relationship and the approval of those terms by both New Castle County and the DRBA Commission.

**About the Delaware River and Bay Authority**

The DRBA, a bi-state governmental agency created by Compact in 1962, owns and operates the Delaware Memorial Bridge, the Cape May- Lewes Ferry, and the Forts Ferry Crossing. The DRBA also manages corporate and aviation properties through its economic development powers - two airports in New Jersey (Millville Airport and Cape May Airport) and three in Delaware (Wilmington Airport, Civil Air Terminal and Delaware Airpark). All DRBA operating revenues are generated through the bridge, ferry and airport facilities. For more information, visit [www.drba.net](http://www.drba.net).