



PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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DRBA Commission Honors Senator Tom Carper ***ILG Passenger Terminal to be named Thomas R. Carper Passenger Terminal Facility***

NEW CASTLE, Del – The Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA) Board of Commissioners recently passed Resolution 25-28 to recognize and honor former U.S. Senator Thomas R. Carper by designating the Wilmington Airport (ILG) Passenger Terminal as the “Thomas R. Carper Passenger Terminal Facility at the Wilmington Airport.” This dedication came shortly after Senator Carper’s retirement on January 3, 2025 and reflects his over 50-year commitment to the State of Delaware and positive impact on the Delaware River & Bay Authority (DRBA).

“On behalf of the DRBA, we’d like to recognize Senator Carper for his steadfast advocacy and support of our organization throughout his career.” said Executive Director Thomas J. Cook. “Upon the news of his retirement, it made perfect sense to acknowledge Senator Carper, a distinguished member of the Delaware Aviation Hall of Fame, by naming our renovated and expanded terminal facility in his honor. From championing the DRBA’s 1995 acquisition of ILG, to relentlessly vying for grants to enhance infrastructure improvements and promote economic growth, Senator Carper will forever be fondly remembered here at the DRBA.”

“Senator Carper's love of flight and commitment to supporting aviation in Delaware was crucial in keeping Wilmington Airport competitive.” said Director of Airport Operations, Ben Clendaniel, A.A.E. “As Delaware's only commercial service airport, he recognized the airport's importance of putting Delaware ‘on the map,’ by enhancing access to air travel for Delawareans and attracting new economic opportunities including aviation jobs to our region. Because of his dedication, we’ve been able to continually strengthen our ability to improve the customer experience and expand connectivity in our community.”

After serving as a flight officer in the U.S. Navy, including 3 tours during the Vietnam War, Captain Carper began his public service career as State Treasurer, taking the oath of office in January 1977. Since then, he has served as Delaware’s only Congressman as a member of the House of Representatives from 1983 - 1992, Governor of Delaware from 1993 – 2000, and U.S. Senator from 2001 until his retirement.

Senator Carper and the DRBA

During his career, Senator Carper focused tirelessly on Delaware's economic development, and worked closely with the DRBA, where he was instrumental in helping expand and support the organization. According to DRBA Board of Commissioners, "Senator Carper has always been a steadfast champion for investments in both infrastructure and environmental stewardship."

Senator Carper advocated for the 1990 Compact Amendments which enabled the Authority to engage in economic development projects, backed the DRBA's sponsorship and operation of Wilmington Airport (ILG) in 1995 (formerly known as New Castle County Airport), and helped the DRBA receive more than \$50 million in federal grant awards during this public service career.

Most recently, in 2024, U.S. Senators Thomas R. Carper joined forces with the Delaware delegation and was instrumental in securing a \$5.6 million grant award through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law's Airport Terminal Program, designated to address aging infrastructure and expand opportunities for the local community. These funds have greatly assisted with funding the current \$9.8 million passenger terminal expansion project, slated to be completed this fall.

In addition to his support of the airport, Senator Carper strongly advocated for and won a \$20 million grant award in 2023 from the U.S. Department of Transportation to help fund the design and construction of a new diesel-hybrid replacement ferry, which serves travelling passengers between Lewes, Delaware and Cape May, New Jersey. In 2018, his role was also critical in the award of a \$22.25 million Department of Transportation (DOT) Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant, for improvements to the Delaware Memorial Bridge, upon which millions of vehicles depend annually.

The DRBA Board of Commissioners concluded, "The Delaware River and Bay Authority does hereby recognize the outstanding contributions of the Honorable Thomas R. Carper to both the State of Delaware and the vital infrastructure that the Delaware River and Bay Authority manages and operates."

A dedication ceremony is expected to take place in late 2025 following the completion of the terminal renovation and expansion project.

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 two airports in New Jersey (Millville Executive Airport and Cape May Airport) and three in Delaware (Wilmington Airport, Civil Air Terminal and Delaware Airpark). All DRBA operating revenues are generated through bridge, ferry and airport facilities. For more information, visit www.drba.net.