

HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP INVESTMENT ACT OF 1995

NOVEMBER 30, 1995.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. SHUSTER, from the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H.R. 308]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 308) to provide for the conveyance of certain lands and improvements in Hopewell Township, Pennsylvania, to a nonprofit organization known as the "Beaver County Corporation for Economic Development" to provide a site for economic development, having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

H.R. 308, the "Hopewell Township Investment Act of 1995" was introduced in Congress for the worthwhile purpose of making certain property productive for the benefit of the community of Hopewell Township, Beaver County, Pennsylvania. The bill will accomplish this by requiring the General Services Administration (GSA) to transfer this land, at no cost, to the Beaver County Corporation for Economic Development. This is a non-profit corporation certified by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The goal of the Corporation, in cooperation with Hopewell Township, is to utilize this property as the centerpiece of a Hopewell Aliquippa Airport Industrial Park and thereby promote economic development and create needed jobs for the people of Hopewell Township.

As of September 23, 1993, this property was designated as surplus and placed in GSA's surplus property inventory. The term surplus property is a reference to any excess property that is not required to meet the needs and discharge the responsibility of any Federal agencies, as determined by the GSA Administrator. As such, it may be conveyed pursuant to the provisions of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949.

BACKGROUND

On September 28, 1981, this land was purchased by the Department of Labor's Mine Safety and Health Administration to house its emergency mine operations. This field operation was expected to employ some 200 Federal workers, who would assist recovery efforts in mine emergencies. The Township of Hopewell invested some \$225,000 in infrastructure improvements in anticipation of the commencement of operations of this Federal facility. However, the facility never opened, as the field operation was transferred to a neighboring state. Subsequently, the Mine Safety and Health Administration reported the property as excess and it was transferred to GSA.

The property is 15.94 acres of narrow-shaped land which runs in an east-west direction. The property is situated approximately seven miles northwest of Pittsburgh International Airport. It is improved primarily by a concrete block building of 43,000 square feet containing warehouse space. The building was originally used to manufacture small aircraft.

Hearings were held on H.R. 308 on June 15, 1995. The bill was marked up by the Subcommittee on Public Buildings and Economic Development on June 20, 1995 and the Full Committee on November 16, 1995. The key provisions of the legislation are conveyance of property at no charge to the Beaver County Corporation for Economic Development no later than 90 days after enactment; and revision of the property to GSA if it is used for a purpose other than economic development during the first thirty years it is held by the Corporation. A similar bill passed the House in the 103rd Congress but the Senate failed to take action.

Property transfer by the Federal government to local entities in efforts to revitalize local economies are of great interest to Congress. H.R. 308 authorizes such a transfer. The General Services Administration (GSA) is urged to expedite another transfer, that of the Social Security Office from GSA to the City of Dubois, Pennsylvania. For over a year, the city has expressed continued interest in acquiring the building, and GSA is in the process of declaring the building excess. When that process is complete, the City and GSA should take every step to expedite this transfer. In addition, the General Services Administration is directed to expedite negotiations to transfer the United States Bureau of Mines, Twin Cities Research Center; Minneapolis, Minnesota to be used in conjunction with the University of Minnesota.

SECTION-BY-SECTION SUMMARY

Section 1. Short title

This section provides that the Act may be cited as the "Hopewell Township Investment Act of 1995".

Sec. 2. Conveyance of land

Subsection (a) provides that the Administrator of General Services shall convey, at no cost, to the Beaver County Corporation for Economic Development all right, title, and interests of the United States in and to the property in Hopewell Township, Pennsylvania, described in subsection (b) which contains a legal description of the

property together with improvements. The conveyance is made subject to section 2 and section 3 (limitation on conveyance). The last sentence of subsection (a) states that the purpose of the conveyance is to provide a site for economic development in Hopewell Township.

Subsection (b) provides a complete legal description of property which is the subject of the conveyance in subsection (a) and is located in Hopewell Township, Beaver County, Pennsylvania.

Subsection (c) provides that the date of conveyance of the property to be transferred under this Act shall be no more than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

Subsection (d)(1) provides that the conveyance of the property under subsection (a) shall be subject to specific terms and conditions to be set forth by the Administrator and designed to protect the interests of the United States. These terms and conditions shall be consistent with the terms and conditions of this Act.

Subsection (d)(2) provides that the conveyance of the property shall be by quitclaim deed. This form of deed passes title without any guarantee by the Federal government that there are not any clouds on the title.

Sec. 3. Limitation on conveyance

This section requires that no part of the conveyed property may be used for any purpose other than economic development during the 30-year period beginning on the date of the conveyance.

Sec. 4. Reversionary interest

Subsection (a) provides that on the day any of the property is not used as required in section 3, the property shall revert to the United States. Subsection (b) provides that the Administrator shall have all authority necessary to enforce a reversion.

Subsection (c) provides that property that reverts to the United States, pursuant to section 4 shall be placed under the control of the General Services Administration.

COMPLIANCE WITH RULE XI

With respect to the requirements of clause 2(l)(3) of rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives:

(1) The Committee held hearings on this legislation on June 15, 1995.

(2) The requirements of section 308(a)(1) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 are applicable to this legislation.

(3) The Committee has received no report from the Committee on Government Operations of oversight findings and recommendations arrived at under clause 4(C)(2) of rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

(4) With respect to clause 2(l)(3)(C) of rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 403 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, a cost estimate by the Congressional Budget Office was received by the Committee. The report follows:

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, November 22, 1995.

Hon. BUD SHUSTER,
*Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, House
of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has reviewed H.R. 308, the Hopewell Township Investment Act of 1995, as ordered by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on November 16, 1995. CBO estimates that enacting this bill would result in a loss of the federal government in fiscal year 1996 of between \$500,000 and \$700,000 of offsetting receipts from the sale of property. Since that loss of offsetting receipts would constitute an increase in direct spending, pay-as-you-go procedures would apply to the bill.

H.R. 308 would direct the General Services Administration (GSA) to convey, without compensation, a building and about 16 acres of property in Hopewell Township, Pennsylvania, to the Beaver County Corporation for Economic Development. Prior to the introduction of similar legislation last year, GSA has been negotiating with Hopewell Township to sell the property, which is in GSA's surplus property inventory. GSA's asking price at that time was \$667,000; presently, GSA estimates that the value of the property is slightly higher than last year's estimate. Under current law, GSA expects that it would sell the property to the township or to some other purchaser in fiscal year 1996. Because this bill would prevent GSA from selling this property, we estimate that it would result in a loss of offsetting receipts to the federal government, and thus an increase in outlays, of between \$500,000 and \$700,000 in fiscal year 1996. The following table summarizes the estimated pay-as-you-go impact of H.R. 308.

[By fiscal year, in millions of dollars]

	1996	1997	1998
Change in outlays	1	0	0
Change in receipts	(1)	(1)	(1)

¹ Not applicable.

Other than the potential savings to the Hopewell Township for receiving the property at no cost, enacting H.R. 308 would have no impact on the budgets of state and local governments.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is John R. Righter.

Sincerely,

JAMES L. BLUM
(For June E. O'Neill, Director).

INFLATIONARY IMPACT STATEMENT

Under (2)(l)(4) of rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure estimates that enactment of H.R. 308 will have no significant inflationary impact on prices and costs in the operation of the national economy.

COST OF LEGISLATION

Clause 7(a) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives requires a statement of the estimated cost to the United States which will be incurred in carrying out H.R. 308, as reported, in fiscal year 1996, and each of the following 5 years.

COMMITTEE ACTIONS AND VOTE

In compliance with clause (2)(1)(2) (A) and (B) of rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, at a meeting of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on November 16, 1995, a quorum being present, H.R. 308 was unanimously approved by a voice vote and ordered reported.

