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CS/HB 4105

2026 Legislature

1
2 An act relating to the Port St. Joe Port Authority,
3 Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, and Liberty Counties;
4 amending chapter 2000-488, Laws of Florida; expanding
5 the Port St. Joe Port Authority to include Franklin,
6 Gadsden, and Liberty Counties; revising membership of
7 the governing body of the authority; providing for the
8 selection of a chair of the governing body; providing
9 for transition; providing for staggered terms;
10 providing an effective date.

11
12 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

13
14 Section 1. Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7 and subsection
15 (12) of section 8 of section 3 of chapter 2000-488, Laws of
16 Florida, are amended to read:

17 Section 1. Creation; boundaries.—There is hereby created a
18 body corporate to be known as the Port St. Joe Port Authority
19 with the corporate powers to sue and be sued and with the
20 additional powers specified herein. Said authority shall be a
21 public agency for the development of commerce and the port of
22 Port St. Joe. The boundaries of the Port St. Joe Port Authority
23 shall embrace and include all of Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, and
24 Liberty Counties.

25 Section 2. Governing Body.—

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26 (1) The Port St. Joe Port Authority shall consist of six
 27 (6) ~~five (5)~~ commissioners who shall constitute said authority.
 28 The said six (6) ~~five (5) members~~ shall be appointed by the
 29 Governor, with one (1) member who is a resident of the City of
 30 Port St. Joe to serve as chair of the authority, two (2) members
 31 who are residents of Gulf County, and one (1) member from each
 32 of Franklin, Gadsden, and Liberty Counties who shall be a
 33 resident of the respective county. ~~from the date this act~~
 34 ~~becomes a law, the first appointments shall be three (3) for~~
 35 ~~four (4) years and two (2) for two (2) years. Thereafter All~~
 36 appointments shall be for a term of four (4) years from the
 37 expiration of the previous term and all vacancies shall be
 38 filled by the Governor for the unexpired term. No commissioner
 39 shall be an officer or employee of the City of Port St. Joe,
 40 Franklin County, Gadsden County, Florida, the County of Gulf
 41 County, Liberty County, or the State of Florida, excepting
 42 members of the militia or notaries public. No more than two (2)
 43 of the commissioners shall be persons who are primarily engaged
 44 in the maritime business, ~~and no person shall be eligible for~~
 45 ~~appointment as commissioner except freeholders of the City of~~
 46 ~~Port St. Joe or Gulf County, Florida. The commissioners~~
 47 ~~constituting the Port St. Joe Port Authority shall select one~~
 48 ~~(1) of their members as chair and the term of office of the~~
 49 ~~chair shall be two (2) years from the date of his or her~~
 50 selection. The commissioners shall receive no compensation for

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51 | their services but the authority is hereby allowed travel and
52 | other expenses which shall be paid as other expenses. Three (3)
53 | commissioners shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of
54 | conducting business, exercising its powers, and for all other
55 | purposes.

56 | (2) Notwithstanding subsection (1) of this section, the
57 | offices and terms of all members of the authority as of the
58 | effective date of this act shall end as of the effective date of
59 | this act, but such members may continue to serve until a
60 | successor in office is appointed by the Governor. In order to
61 | provide for staggered terms, one (1) member who is a resident of
62 | Gulf County and one (1) member who is a resident of Gadsden
63 | County initially appointed to the authority after the effective
64 | date of this act shall serve two (2) year terms.

65 | Section 3. Employees.—The Port St. Joe Port Authority is
66 | hereby empowered to employ an executive director of the
67 | authority whose compensation shall be fixed by resolution of the
68 | commissioners of said authority. And the said authority is
69 | empowered to employ its own counsel, secretary, technical
70 | experts, and such other employees, permanent and temporary, as
71 | it may require, and it is empowered to determine the
72 | qualifications, duties, and compensation of such employees. None
73 | of the said employees shall be covered by any local civil
74 | service laws now or hereafter in effect with respect to

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75 employees of the City of Port St. Joe or Franklin County,
 76 Gadsden County, Gulf County, or Liberty County.

77 Section 4. Powers.—The Port St. Joe Port Authority, as
 78 hereby created, is hereby authorized and empowered:

79 (1) To own and acquire property or facilities by purchase,
 80 lease, easement, eminent domain, gift, or transfer from the City
 81 of Port St. Joe or from Franklin County, Gadsden County, Gulf
 82 County, or Liberty County, the United States of America, the
 83 State of Florida, any agencies thereof, corporations, or
 84 individuals,

85 (2) To acquire, construct, maintain, and operate: port
 86 terminal facilities; warehouses; wharves; docks; drydocks;
 87 quays; yacht basins; bridges; ship basins; breakwaters;
 88 foundation for shipways; fitting out docks; shipyards; marine
 89 railways; railroads; repair shops; loading and unloading,
 90 packaging and refrigeration facilities; and all other harbor,
 91 port, commercial, and industrial improvements and facilities,

92 (3) To enter into contracts or leases with individuals,
 93 corporations, any municipality, the State of Florida, and the
 94 United States of America, or any other public body to operate
 95 facilities owned or leased by said port authority,

96 (4) To enter into contracts for furthering the business,
 97 operation, and maintenance of shipping facilities and harbor and
 98 port improvements within the boundaries of the authority ~~Gulf~~
 99 ~~County.~~

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100 Section 6. Limitation of Powers.—The Port St. Joe Port
 101 Authority, as hereby created, shall have no power or authority
 102 to bind or commit the City of Port St. Joe, a municipal
 103 corporation, or Franklin County, Gadsden County, Gulf County, or
 104 Liberty County, in any manner, directly or indirectly; and the
 105 said City of Port St. Joe or Franklin County, Gadsden County,
 106 Gulf County, or Liberty County shall not be liable or
 107 responsible in any manner for any of the debts, liabilities,
 108 obligations, acts, or omissions of the Port St. Joe Port
 109 Authority or any of its officers or employees. All persons
 110 dealing with the said authority are hereby charged with full
 111 notice of this limitation and its powers.

112 Section 7. Appropriations from local governments ~~City of~~
 113 ~~Port St. Joe and Gulf County~~.—The City of Port St. Joe, as well
 114 as Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, and Liberty Counties, ~~and also Gulf~~
 115 ~~County~~ are empowered to appropriate and contribute to the Port
 116 St. Joe Port Authority such sums of money for the operation
 117 expenses of the said authority as the commission of the said
 118 city and the county commission may from year to year determine
 119 through the city's and county's budgets. Such sums of money as
 120 are so appropriated and contributed by the City of Port St. Joe
 121 and the aforementioned counties ~~Gulf County~~ shall be paid to the
 122 Port St. Joe Port Authority upon its requisition signed by the
 123 chair and any two (2) other members thereof. The County
 124 Commission of Gulf County may pledge the second gas tax or may

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125 | levy a millage and the City of Port St. Joe may levy a millage
 126 | to finance said Port St. Joe Port Authority.

127 | Section 8. Minimum Charter Requirements.—

128 | (12) The District's geographic boundary limitations shall
 129 | consist of all of Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, and Liberty Counties
 130 | ~~be the same as those of Gulf County.~~

131 | Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.