

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2531
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Economic & Small Business Development
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Current law authorizes money in the spaceport trust fund to pay expenditures for the development of infrastructure necessary or useful for establishing a spaceport. Interested parties note that although the International Space Station is managed at National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Johnson Space Center in Houston, there is no state program that currently exists to promote space station research in Texas. C.S.H.B. 2531 seeks to address this issue to benefit Texas businesses and citizens and the academic community of Texas' universities.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2531 amends the Government Code to expand the authorized uses of money in the spaceport trust fund to include funding programs related to research conducted onboard the International Space Station, including a program that provides money to a nonprofit organization to support that research if the organization is formed in Texas, has a Space Act agreement with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and has the authority to use the capabilities of NASA, the aerospace industry, and institutions of higher education. The bill requires such a nonprofit organization to use any money received from the spaceport trust fund to support the research conducted onboard the International Space Station in collaboration with companies formed in Texas or public-private partnerships. The bill includes as a condition under which money in the fund may be spent for such use certification from the Texas Economic Development and Tourism Office to the comptroller of public accounts that the money will be used to pay for the research programs.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2013.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 2531 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following comparison is organized and highlighted in a manner that indicates the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

INTRODUCED		HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE	
SECTION	1. Section 481.0069, Government Code, is amended by amending Subsections (d) and (e) and adding	SECTION	1. Section 481.0069, Government Code, is amended by amending Subsections (d) and (e) and adding

Subsection (e-1) to read as follows:

(d) Money in the spaceport trust fund may not be spent unless the office certifies to the comptroller;

(1) that:

(A) ~~[(1)]~~ a viable business entity has been established that:

(i) ~~[(A)]~~ has a business plan that demonstrates that the entity has available the financial, managerial, and technical expertise and capability necessary to launch and land a reusable launch vehicle; and

(ii) ~~[(B)]~~ has committed to locating its facilities at a spaceport in this state;

(B) ~~[(2)]~~ a development corporation for spaceport facilities created under Chapter 507, Local Government Code, has established a development plan for the spaceport project and has secured at least 90 percent of the funding required for the project; and

(C) ~~[(3)]~~ the spaceport or launch operator has obtained the appropriate Federal Aviation Administration license; or

(2) that the money will be used to pay for educational programs described by Subsection (e)(2).

(e) Money in the spaceport trust fund may be used only;

(1) to pay expenditures for the development of infrastructure necessary or useful for establishing a spaceport; or

(2) to pay for educational programs related to the aerospace industry, including:

(A) science, technology, engineering, and mathematics courses designed to introduce middle school and high school students to the aerospace industry; and

(B) science and technology competitions, including science fairs and robotics competitions.

Subsections (e-1) and (e-2) to read as follows:

(d) Money in the spaceport trust fund may not be spent unless the office certifies to the comptroller;

(1) that:

(A) ~~[(1)]~~ a viable business entity has been established that:

(i) ~~[(A)]~~ has a business plan that demonstrates that the entity has available the financial, managerial, and technical expertise and capability necessary to launch and land a reusable launch vehicle; and

(ii) ~~[(B)]~~ has committed to locating its facilities at a spaceport in this state;

(B) ~~[(2)]~~ a development corporation for spaceport facilities created under Chapter 507, Local Government Code, has established a development plan for the spaceport project and has secured at least 90 percent of the funding required for the project; and

(C) ~~[(3)]~~ the spaceport or launch operator has obtained the appropriate Federal Aviation Administration license; or

(2) that the money will be used to pay for programs described by Subsection (e)(2).

(e) Money in the spaceport trust fund may be used only;

(1) to pay expenditures for the development of infrastructure necessary or useful for establishing a spaceport; or

(2) to fund programs related to research conducted onboard the International Space Station, including a program that provides money, subject to Subsection (e-1), to a nonprofit organization to support that research, if the organization:

(A) is formed in this state;

(B) has a Space Act agreement with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration; and

(C) has the authority to use the capabilities of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the aerospace industry, and

(e-1) The office may contract with a development corporation for spaceport facilities for the infrastructure development.

SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2013.

institutions of higher education.

(e-1) A nonprofit organization described by Subsection (e)(2) shall use any money received under this section to support the research described by that subdivision in collaboration with:

(1) companies formed in this state; or

(2) public-private partnerships.

(e-2) The office may contract with a development corporation for spaceport facilities for the infrastructure development.

SECTION 2. Same as introduced version.