
Texas Aerospace Commission

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S.B. 275 Nelson (Solomons/Keffer, J.)

Summary

The Legislature created the Texas Space Commission in 1987 to encourage economic development of industries related to the commercialization of space, renaming it the Texas Aerospace Commission in 1993. The Commission helps recruit and expand aerospace industries in Texas; administers state grant funds to assist with the establishment of spaceports (reusable launch facilities); and helps promote space-related research. The Commission currently operates with a staff of three, and its annual appropriation is \$212,815.

Senate Bill 269 contained the Sunset Commission's recommendation to clarify the Commission's mission and continue it for 12 years. However, this bill did not pass. Instead, the Legislature adopted Senate Bill 275 that transfers the functions of the Texas Aerospace Commission to the Aerospace and Aviation Office, within the newly-created Texas Economic Development and Tourism Office in the Governor's Office. Transferring these functions will result in an annual savings of \$127,689. The list below summarizes the major provisions of S.B. 275 that relate to the Texas Aerospace Commission, and a more detailed discussion follows.

Sunset Provision

1. Clarify the Texas Aerospace Commission's Mission as Fostering the Development of Both the Aerospace and Aviation Industries.

Provision Added by the Legislature

2. Transfer the Functions of the Texas Aerospace Commission to the Texas Economic Development and Tourism Office.

Sunset Provision

1. Clarify the Texas Aerospace Commission's Mission as Fostering the Development of Both the Aerospace and Aviation Industries.

The Legislature modified the Sunset provision to require the Aerospace and Aviation Office, rather than the Texas Aerospace Commission, to foster the growth and development of both the aerospace and aviation industries. Senate Bill 275 requires the Aerospace and Aviation Office to perform the following duties.

- Analyze the state's economic position in the aerospace and aviation industries.
- Develop short-term and long-term business strategies as part of an industry-specific strategic plan to promote the retention, development, and expansion of aerospace and aviation industry facilities in the state.
- Make specific recommendations to the Legislature and the Governor regarding the promotion of aerospace and aviation industries.
- Act as a liaison with other state and federal entities with related economic, educational, and defense responsibilities to support the marketing of the state's aerospace and aviation capabilities.
- Provide technical support and expertise to the state and local spaceport authorities regarding aerospace and aviation business matters.
- Promote and develop spaceports in this state.

Provision Added by the Legislature

2. Transfer the Functions of the Texas Aerospace Commission to the Texas Economic Development and Tourism Office.

The Legislature added a provision to S.B. 275 to transfer the functions of the Texas Aerospace Commission to the Aerospace and Aviation Office, within the Texas Economic Development and Tourism Office in the Governor's Office. The bill abolishes the seven-member policymaking body of the Texas Aerospace Commission, but requires the Governor to appoint a seven-member Aerospace and Aviation Advisory Committee. The executive director of the Texas Aerospace Commission becomes the director of the Aerospace and Aviation Office.

Removed Provision

1. Continue the Texas Aerospace Commission for 12 Years.

The Legislature did not adopt the Sunset recommendation to continue the Texas Aerospace Commission for 12 years as a separate, stand-alone state agency.

Fiscal Implication Summary

Abolishing the Texas Aerospace Commission and transferring its functions to the Aerospace and Aviation Office will result in annual savings of \$127,689 and a reduction of two staff positions.

| Fiscal Year | Savings to the General Revenue Related Funds | Change in Staff Positions From 2003 |
|--------------------|---|--|
| 2004 | \$127,689 | -2 |
| 2005 | \$127,689 | -2 |
| 2006 | \$127,689 | -2 |
| 2007 | \$127,689 | -2 |
| 2008 | \$127,689 | -2 |

