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Lucio Bill to Promote Space Flight in Cameron County Passes out of Senate Committee

AUSTIN - Today, Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr. (D-Brownsville) announces Senate committee passage of a bill intended to promote space flight in Cameron County. Senate Bill 1574, which ensures the public's right to beach access, while also providing a way to protect public safety during commercial space launches, passed out of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources Tuesday.

"I'm happy to support legislation which will bring a vital new space industry in South Texas," Senator Lucio said. "The proposed operation launch site will infuse an estimated \$51 million annually into our regional economy, and will create approximately 600 well-paying jobs. More than that, the social benefits of getting our children interested in space and technology are incalculable."

The Federal Aviation Administration is currently considering a proposed vertical launch site in the Boca Chica area near Brownsville. Should the project get approved, access to areas within a certain radius of site would need to be restricted on proposed launch dates. This radius would include state-owned beaches.

As passed out of Committee, [Senate Bill 1574](#) would require the state's General Land Office to promulgate rules on the closure of beaches affected by an FAA-approved site.

Under the bill, before a launch can be conducted, the Cameron County Commissioners Court must receive an application which includes the launch date, as well as backup launch dates. Additionally, the bill provides that the Commissioners Court first seek approval from the General Land Office before closing the beach on certain days in the summer. Specifically, the County must get approval for the Fourth of July, Labor day, Memorial Day, the Saturday or Sunday preceding Memorial Day, and weekends between Memorial Day and Labor Day.

Now passed out of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Senate Bill 1574 moves to the full Senate. The bill is a companion to [House Bill 2623](#) by Representative Rene Oliveira.

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