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SpaceX Legislation Signed by Governor

AUSTIN - Legislation that will advance the proposed SpaceX Boca Chica Beach commercial space launch project was signed into law by Gov. Rick Perry Friday.

House Bill 2623 by State Rep. Rene Oliveira and sponsored in the Senate by Sen. Eddie Lucio, Jr. allows Cameron County to temporarily close an area of beach for launches and space flight activities with approval of the General Land Office. The bill was co-sponsored in the House by State Reps. Eddie Lucio III and Doc Anderson.

The project, if located in Cameron County, is expected to create 600 jobs, 400 indirect jobs and potentially \$80 million in new capital investment.

"I thank the Governor and members of the budget conference committee for their support of future space flight in Cameron County. Encouraging a future commercial space industry in South Texas will create hundreds of permanent well-paying jobs, and pump millions of dollars into our local economy by developing related supply and tourism industries. This will provide a considerable boost to Texas' economy and to the economy of our economically distressed area of the state. Perhaps even more importantly, the site will inspire a generation of Texans to literally shoot for the stars and pursue study in science and technology,." said Lucio

The bill specifies that a county must have the approval of the state's General Land Office before a launch may be made. The bill also prohibits the closure of a beach during the Saturday or Sunday preceding Memorial Day; Memorial Day; July 4; a Saturday after Memorial Day but before Labor Day; and, a Sunday after Memorial Day but before Labor Day.

"We've balanced the peoples' access to their beach at times of peak usage and we have shown a world-class company that Cameron County and Brownsville are doing everything in our power to bring them to South Texas," said Oliveira. "The project will pay big dividends in jobs, home and auto sales, science and math curriculum, and national attention focused on our area."

The proposed SpaceX project recently cleared initial Federal Aviation Administration environmental impact studies. If the FAA does not approve SpaceX's launch site, the beaches cannot be closed. .

"We are hopeful that the passage of this legislation, along with a solid package from the state, will compel SpaceX to come to Cameron County. The bill represents the hard work of many people trying to make it happen," Oliveira said.