

Val L. Peterson proposes the following substitute bill:

**Spaceport Exploration Committee**

2025 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Jerry W. Stevenson**

House Sponsor: Val L. Peterson

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**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This bill creates the Spaceport Exploration Committee.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

- creates the Spaceport Exploration Committee; and
- establishes membership and duties of the committee.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

This bill appropriates \$1,000,000 in operating and capital budgets for fiscal year 2026, all of which is from the various sources as detailed in this bill.

**Other Special Clauses:**

None

**Utah Code Sections Affected:**

AMENDS:

**63I-1-272**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Third Special Session, Chapter 5

ENACTS:

**72-10-1301**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

**72-10-1302**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

**72-10-1303**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

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*Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

Section 1. Section **63I-1-272** is amended to read:

**63I-1-272 . Repeal dates: Title 72.**

(1) Section 72-2-134, Transportation Infrastructure General Fund Support Subfund, is repealed July 1, 2027.

(2) Title 72, Chapter 4, Part 3, Utah State Scenic Byway Program, is repealed January 2, 2030.

(3) Title 72, Chapter 10, Part 13, Spaceport Exploration Committee, is repealed July 1, 2027.

Section 2. Section **72-10-1301** is enacted to read:

## **CHAPTER 10. AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ACT**

### **Part 13. Spaceport Exploration Committee**

#### **72-10-1301 . Definitions.**

As used in this part:

- (1) "Committee" means the Spaceport Exploration Committee created in Section 72-10-1302.
- (2) "Spaceport feasibility study" means a study to determine the feasibility of establishing a spaceport and that includes:
- (a) a market analysis that evaluates the demand for space launch services, including potential government, commercial, and international customers and competitors;
  - (b) an economic impact assessment that analyzes the projected economic benefits of developing a spaceport, including job creation, local business growth, revenue generation, and an analysis of projected customers that could use the spaceport;
  - (c) a business case that describes how the spaceport could meet customer needs and attract private financing for the spaceport;
  - (d) detailed cost estimates for construction, operation, and maintenance of a spaceport, including infrastructure, technology, and human resources;
  - (e) consideration of the activities at the spaceport that the committee identifies the spaceport should support; and
  - (f) in consultation with the Utah National Guard and the Utah Test and Training Range, an assessment of opportunities to leverage military airspace and infrastructure and uses the military might have for a spaceport.
- (3) "Spaceport siting assessment" means an assessment that is informed by the results of a spaceport feasibility study to determine potential locations for a spaceport that includes an analysis of:
- (a) the extent to which the site can accomplish the spaceport objectives that the committee identifies;
  - (b) geographic and environmental considerations, including the site's size, location, and environmental impact;
  - (c) whether the site is remote enough to minimize risk to populated areas and complies

- 63           with environmental regulations;
- 64           (d) infrastructure needs, including existing infrastructure and upgrades needed to support
- 65           spaceport resources including launchpads, control centers, roads, utilities, and
- 66           facilities;
- 67           (e) potential sources of significant infrastructure upgrades;
- 68           (f) accessibility, including consideration for the site's accessibility for transportation and
- 69           logistics;
- 70           (g) connections to major highways, airports, and ports;
- 71           (h) regulatory compliance with applicable federal law, including regulations from the
- 72           Federal Aviation Administration and Environmental Protection Agency;
- 73           (i) resources the state may leverage for a particular site, including tax benefits, land
- 74           ownership, land use authority, and regulatory benefits;
- 75           (j) whether the site preserves the viability of the Utah Test and Training Range and all
- 76           Department of Defense missions in the state;
- 77           (k) the existing uses and needs of Utah airspace, including for an international airport in
- 78           a county of the first class; and
- 79           (l) activities that the committee identifies that the spaceport should support.
- 80           (4) "Supported activities" means the types of activities that could occur at a spaceport
- 81           including:
- 82           (a) satellite launches;
- 83           (b) scientific missions;
- 84           (c) national defense missions;
- 85           (d) commercial space flights;
- 86           (e) space exploration;
- 87           (f) space cargo and resupply missions;
- 88           (g) space tourism; and
- 89           (h) space industry research and development.

90           Section 3. Section **72-10-1302** is enacted to read:

91           **72-10-1302 . Spaceport Exploration Committee creation.**

- 92           (1) There is created the Spaceport Exploration Committee, comprising of the following
- 93           members:
- 94           (a) two members of the Senate, whom the president of the Senate appoints;
- 95           (b) two members of the House of Representatives, whom the speaker of the House of
- 96           Representatives appoints;

- (c) the executive director of the department or the executive director's designee;
- (d) the executive director of the Utah Inland Port Authority created in Section 11-58-201;
- (e) the president, or the president's designee, of a nonprofit organization owned by Utah State University that is a University Affiliated Research Center that specializes in aerospace technology, missions, and defense;
- (f) two liaisons from local military organizations, whom the co-chairs jointly appoint;
- (g) the president of the state's largest aerospace and defense industry group as certified by the executive director of the department;
- (h) the executive director of an international airport within a county of the first class, or the executive director's designee; and
- (i) four members whom the governor appoints.

(2) The following shall co-chair the committee:

- (a) a committee member that is a legislator described in Subsection (1)(a) or (1)(b) whom the speaker of the House of Representatives and the president of the Senate jointly designate; and
- (b) a committee member whom the governor selects.

(3) When a vacancy occurs in the membership for any reason, the appointing authority or qualification described in Subsection (1) applies to the replacement in the same manner as the filling of the original position.

(4) A majority of members of the committee constitutes a quorum.

(5) A member may not receive compensation or benefits for the member's service, but may receive per diem and travel expenses as allowed in:

- (a) Section 63A-3-106;
- (b) Section 63A-3-107; and
- (c) rules made by the Division of Finance according to Sections 63A-3-106 and 63A-3-107.

(6) The department shall provide staffing and administrative support to the committee.

Section 4. Section **72-10-1303** is enacted to read:

**72-10-1303 . Spaceport Exploration Committee duties.**

(1) The committee shall:

- (a) establish key objectives that the state should pursue in establishing a spaceport;
- (b) evaluate the supported activities that would be most feasible for a spaceport in the state;
- (c) conduct a spaceport feasibility study;

- (d) conduct a spaceport siting assessment;
- (e) evaluate the advantages and disadvantages the state has in establishing a spaceport;
- and
- (f) make recommendations to the Legislature regarding whether it is in the state's best
- interest to establish a spaceport.

(2) The committee may:

- (a) authorize the department to contract with one or more consultants to perform
- research, analysis, and legal work, or to provide other assistance necessary to
- accomplish the committee's duties;
- (b) establish any advisory committees or working groups needed to fulfill the
- committee's responsibilities;
- (c) by majority vote, add up to three non-voting committee members; and
- (d) appoint one or more working groups to advise and assist the committee.

(3) The committee shall:

- (a) create a report that:
  - (i) details the committee's conclusions on the items described in Subsection (1); and
  - (ii) includes recommendations on legislation needed to implement the committee's
  - conclusions; and
- (b) report to the Economic Development and Workforce Services Interim Committee
- and the Transportation Interim Committee no later than September 30, 2026.

**Section 5. FY 2026 Appropriations.**

The following sums of money are appropriated for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026. These are additions to amounts previously appropriated for fiscal year 2026.

**Subsection 5(a). Operating and Capital Budgets**

Under the terms and conditions of Title 63J, Chapter 1, Budgetary Procedures Act, the Legislature appropriates the following sums of money from the funds or accounts indicated for the use and support of the government of the state of Utah.

**ITEM 1 To Transportation - Aeronautics**

From General Fund Restricted - Industrial Assistance

Account, One-time

1,000,000

Schedule of Programs:

Administration

1,000,000

**Section 6. Effective Date.**

165    This bill takes effect on May 7, 2025.