

Spaceport Exploration Committee

2025 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Jerry W. Stevenson

House Sponsor: Val L. Peterson

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

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(1) Section 72-2-134, Transportation Infrastructure General Fund Support Subfund, is repealed July 1, 2027.

(2) Title 72, Chapter 4, Part 3, Utah State Scenic Byway Program, is repealed January 2,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- (3) Title 72, Chapter 10, Part 13, Spaceport Exploration Committee, is repealed July 1, 2027.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;

- 62 (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;
97 (c) the executive director of the department or the executive director's designee;
98 (d) the executive director of the Utah Inland Port Authority created in Section 11-58-201;
99 (e) the president, or the president's designee, of a nonprofit organization owned by Utah
100 State University that is a University Affiliated Research Center that specializes in
101 aerospace technology, missions, and defense;
102 (f) two liaisons from local military organizations, whom the co-chairs jointly appoint;
103 (g) the president of the state's largest aerospace and defense industry group as certified
104 by the executive director of the department;
105 (h) the executive director of an international airport within a county of the first class, or
106 the executive director's designee; and
107 (i) four members whom the governor appoints.
108 (2) The following shall co-chair the committee:
109 (a) a committee member that is a legislator described in Subsection (1)(a) or (1)(b)
110 whom the speaker of the House of Representatives and the president of the Senate
111 jointly designate; and
112 (b) a committee member whom the governor selects.
113 (3) When a vacancy occurs in the membership for any reason, the appointing authority or
114 qualification described in Subsection (1) applies to the replacement in the same manner
115 as the filling of the original position.
116 (4) A majority of members of the committee constitutes a quorum.
117 (5) A member may not receive compensation or benefits for the member's service, but may
118 receive per diem and travel expenses as allowed in:
119 (a) Section 63A-3-106;
120 (b) Section 63A-3-107; and
121 (c) rules made by the Division of Finance according to Sections 63A-3-106 and
122 63A-3-107.
123 (6) The department shall provide staffing and administrative support to the committee.
124 Section 4. Section **72-10-1303** is enacted to read:
125 **72-10-1303 . Spaceport Exploration Committee duties.**
126 (1) The committee shall:
127 (a) establish key objectives that the state should pursue in establishing a spaceport;
128 (b) evaluate the supported activities that would be most feasible for a spaceport in the
129 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

164 Section 6. **Effective Date.**
165 This bill takes effect on May 7, 2025.