

**SUBJECT:** Using money in the spaceport trust fund for aerospace research programs

**COMMITTEE:** Economic and Small Business Development — committee substitute recommended

**VOTE:** 8 ayes — J. Davis, Vo, Bell, Isaac, Murphy, Perez, E. Rodriguez, Workman

0 nays

1 absent — Y. Davis

**WITNESSES:** None

**BACKGROUND:** Under Government Code, sec. 481.0069 the Texas Economic Development and Tourism Office operates a spaceport trust fund. Funding for the spaceport trust fund may come from either charitable sources or specific appropriations by the Legislature. Currently, there is no money in the spaceport trust fund.

The authorized use of the spaceport trust fund is to fund infrastructure expenditures related to a spaceport. In order for a recipient to be eligible for this funding, the Economic Development and Tourism Office must certify certain information to the comptroller, including that a viable business entity with the necessary resources to engage in spaceflight has committed to locate its facilities in the state.

**DIGEST:** CSHB 2531 would amend Government Code, sec. 481.0069 to permit a second authorized use of the spaceport trust fund. Funding would be allowed to go to programs related to research conducted onboard the International Space Station. Programs providing money to a nonprofit engaged in this research also could receive funding if such an organization were formed in the state and had proper authorization from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to engage in this research area. Nonprofit recipients of research funding under this section would have to work in collaboration with companies formed in this state or public-private partnerships.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2013.