

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
76R7433 DWS-D

S.B. 976
By: Brown
Technology & Business Growth
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As Filed

DIGEST

Currently, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has backed technology outreach programs in at least one other state, in accordance with its charter, which states that technologies developed during space exploration are to be shared with American companies. For instance, Florida has developed a Technological Research and Development Authority, which has been very successful in teaming county economic development organizations and NASA-Kennedy Space Center to apply NASA and private aerospace engineering expertise to the challenges of local businesses, at no cost to the businesses. Florida officials estimate that these contributions have saved four companies from closing, and have protected and created other jobs. This bill would create a Texas business technology outreach program to assist businesses in the state in making use of technology developed by NASA.

PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 976 creates a Texas business technology outreach program to assist businesses in the state in making use of technology developed by National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is granted to the Texas Aerospace Commission in SECTION 1 (Section 482.004(d), Government Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 482, Government Code, by adding Section 482.004, as follows:

Sec. 482.004. BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY OUTREACH PROGRAM. Requires the Texas Aerospace Commission (commission) to develop a business technology outreach program to assist businesses in this state to make use of technology developed by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Requires the commission to work with NASA, appropriate businesses, and economic development organizations in this state to carry out the program. Authorizes the commission to award grants to economic development organizations for use in recruiting appropriate businesses for participation in the program and provide other appropriate assistance to program participants, from money in the Texas Aerospace Commission account. Requires the commission to appoint a board of technical advisors to evaluate requests from economic development organizations and businesses for assistance under the program and advise the commission on distribution of the assistance. Requires the commission to adopt rules to administer the program, including rules relating to application and eligibility for grants. Authorizes the commission to enter agreements as necessary to carry out the program.

SECTION 2. Provides that before September 1, 2000, the commission shall provide assistance under Section 482.004, Government Code, only in a county with a population of more than 200,000 that contains, or is contiguous to a county that contains, a NASA facility. Authorizes the commission to provide assistance throughout the state, on or after September 1, 2000.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 1999.

SECTION 4. Emergency clause.