

Lawmakers move to position Louisiana for aerospace investment

By Dillon Lowe



A cluster of House bills filed just before this session's introduction deadline suggests that state leaders may be positioning Louisiana to land a major aerospace project.

The bills address tax incentives, legal liability and public records, among other matters. Together, they form what appears to be a coordinated package designed to make the state more competitive for large-scale aerospace investment.

Key lawmakers are carrying the bills, including Rep. Tony Bacala, R-Prairieville, who chairs the House Ways and Means Committee, and Rep. Jack McFarland, R-Jonesboro, who chairs the House Appropriations Committee.

[House Bill 1088](#), authored by Bacala, would authorize a state and local sales and use tax rebate for equipment, machinery, materials and other items “used in aerospace facilities and aerospace activities.”

To qualify for the rebate, a project would need to involve at least \$1 billion in new capital investment within a specific timeframe—on or after July 1, 2026, but before July 1, 2031—and create a minimum of 200 direct new jobs.

[HB1179](#), authored by Bacala, would extend eligibility for Louisiana’s Industrial Tax Exemption Program to “aerospace manufacturing establishments.”

[HB1033](#), authored by Bacala, would classify aerospace facilities as “critical infrastructure,” placing them under heightened security protections and imposing more stringent criminal penalties for unauthorized access.

[HB1098](#) and [HB1099](#), both authored by McFarland, would significantly limit legal exposure for aerospace companies operating in Louisiana.

HB1098 would shield “aerospace flight entities” from claims tied to common operational impacts like noise, light, odor, smoke and vibration and would also stipulate that such entities not be held responsible for damage or injury to a flight participant if the participant “signed an agreement and gave consent as required by certain federal law.”

HB1099, meanwhile, would bar courts from issuing injunctions or other orders that could halt or restrict aerospace operations and would bar claims seeking damages for certain losses—diminution in property value and emotional distress among them—if they arise from aerospace flight activities.

[HB1071](#), authored by McFarland, addresses confidentiality.

The measure would exempt a wide range of aerospace-related records from Louisiana’s Public Records Law, including blueprints, designs, operational documents, security information and technical data, if the entity with custody of the records is subject to federal arms regulations or holds a contract with the U.S. Department of Defense or any agency within the U.S. intelligence community.

[HB1175](#), authored by Rep. Christopher Turner, R-Ruston, would establish definitions for aerospace facilities and activities, standardizing the terminology that underpins the larger package.

Each of the bills was filed March 30 or 31; the deadline for introducing bills was 6 p.m. on March 31.

What remains unclear is whether the bills are tied to a specific project already under consideration or whether they are intended to strengthen Louisiana's position in the aerospace sector more broadly.

In LED's telling, it's the latter. Emma Wagner, LED's executive director of communications, tells *Daily Report* aerospace and defense is one of Louisiana's seven priority sectors, having been identified as a key "right-to-win" industry in which the state can build on existing strengths to compete globally.

She also notes that the sector is seeing rapid expansion, with activity up more than 77% over the past five years.

"Louisiana's focus aligns directly with federal priorities around onshoring manufacturing, strengthening supply chains and increasing defense production, positioning the state to capture a growing share of that investment," Wagner says.

Bacala and McFarland were unable to be reached for comment before this afternoon's publication deadline.

Louisiana is already home to NASA's Michoud Assembly Facility in New Orleans.

Editor's Note: *This article has been updated since its original publication to include a comment from Louisiana Economic Development.*

URL: <https://www.businessreport.com/business/lawmakers-move-to-position-louisiana-for-aerospace-investment>