

# **The Issues: Cruise Ship Industry in Texas**

## **Bringing the Cruise Industry to Texas: Jobs, Tourism, Distinction**

### **Cruise Ships Industry: The Facts**

- An estimated fifteen million passengers took cruises in 2010.
  - Eleven million were out of North America.
- Since 1980, the annual increase of passengers is around 7.4%.
- North American cruise lines, their employees and passengers produced approximately \$35 billion in gross economic output in the United States.
- The cruise industry also generated 313,998 jobs paying out \$14.23 billion in wages and salaries.
- Direct spending was an estimated \$17.5 billion dollars.
- A cruise ship requires 950 crew members and those crew members spend over \$300,000 in onshore spending in the ship's U.S. homeport.

Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) 5 the cruise industry bill, was filed as the Senate companion to House Concurrent Resolution (HCR) 29 by State Representative Todd Hunter during the 82<sup>nd</sup> Regular Legislative Session. These resolutions were filed as a result of numerous town hall meetings that Rep. Hunter hosted throughout District 32. The most common theme heard at the town hall meeting was, "why has the cruise industry not been expanded to the South Texas coastline?"

The discussion about bringing the cruise industry to the South Texas coast has been on the minds of people for many years. SCR 5 will hopefully help bring the cruise ship industry one step closer to recognizing that the South Texas coastline is a great location to open additional ports of departure leaving out of Texas. SCR 5 specifically calls for the Lieutenant Governor and the Speaker of the House of Representatives to provide for a joint interim legislative study to analyze the development of a cruise industry on the Texas coast between Calhoun and Cameron Counties and review its potential economic impact.

It is clear that the cruise industry possibly represents a significant economic boost to South Texas if the cruise industry would choose to locate a departure port out of one of the ports located south of Calhoun County and north of Cameron County.

By providing a state interim legislative study, the State of Texas can begin to outline not only the benefits of the economic impact that can be generated in South Texas by the development of the cruise industry, but also the benefits South Texas offers to the cruise industry. Using 2010 census data, South Texas is home to over two million people, as well as having a close proximity to over two million people in the San Antonio area and a North Mexico market -- which has been virtually untapped by the U.S. cruise industry. At the end of the day, South

Texas represents one of the fastest growing regions in the state. Along with the population in South Texas and its surrounding areas, the region offers a robust tourism industry, a wealth of natural resources and three major deep-water ports that could be used to host a cruise line.

As the discussion of the cruise industry in South Texas moves forward, Rep. Hunter will keep you informed. Please do not hesitate to call his offices if you have any questions regarding SCR 5.

- State Representative Todd Hunter, District 32

*Rep. Hunter represents Aransas, Calhoun, Nueces (Part) and San Patricio Counties. He can be contacted at [todd.hunter@house.state.tx.us](mailto:todd.hunter@house.state.tx.us) or at 512-463-0672.*