

Pragmatism must prevail over wishful thinking

Realistic assessment of options and alternatives for coastal job-creation do not substantiate support for the Camden spaceport. Wishful thinking only goes so far.

Foremost, consider that a multitude of residences, tourists, and workers are in the paths of proposed launches. Every other successful spaceport is either directly adjacent to open water or unoccupied land areas along the flight path. In stark contrast, Camden's proposal features thousands living and working in harm's way, beneath the swath of potential destruction of falling debris when launches fail – as they commonly do. Areas at risk include Cumberland Island National Seashore, Little Cumberland Island, and southern Jekyll Island.

Regulations require evacuation of areas along the flight path to protect public safety. In Camden this would entail costly and extremely impractical steps that would disrupt the lives and daily activities of residents, businesses, and tourists alike.

Another impediment is the need to restrict airspace and the closure of navigable waterways during scheduled launches. In addition to the period of the launch itself, there are often delays for hours as preparations incur last-minute difficulties. Is it really in the interest of Camden's businesses and residences to disrupt their activities for unpredictably prolonged periods?

Moreover, there are already numerous licensed spaceports in the nation – without these significant risks and public costs – that are woefully underused.

Ensuring appropriate security of the Kings Bay Trident Submarine Base is another important factor related to the proposal – which remains conspicuously under-evaluated.

Coastal Georgia's economic planning must be tempered by such real-world insights.