

February 26, 2024

To the Members of the United States Senate:

The undersigned organizations strongly urge the Senate to include S. 1631, the “Safeguarding the Homeland from the Threats Posed by Unmanned Aircraft Systems Act” in S. 1939, the “FAA Reauthorization Act of 2023.”

Drones provide substantial economic, social, and national security benefits to the United States. While the overwhelming majority of drone operations are safe and pose minimal risks, the misuse of drones may harm public safety and the economy. These risks could be multiple including national security and terrorism threats, disrupting commercial activity, industrial espionage, criminal activity, and endangering air travel. These risks are more acute with critical infrastructure facilities and operations, mass gatherings such as sporting and entertainment events and sites, and America’s airspace system.

Current law limits the use of counter-drone technologies to four federal agencies for a select set of government missions. While these existing authorities are important, a more comprehensive approach is necessary to effectively defend sensitive public and private sector operations, events, and facilities. S. 1631 addresses that gap through responsibly providing counter-drone detection and mitigation authorities to other key federal government agencies and functions, advanced detection authorities to private sector entities, and a pilot program for state and local law enforcement. Without expanded authorities, sensitive facilities, operations, and events are at significant risk from malicious and unauthorized drone operations.

Finally, we believe that S.1631 strikes an appropriate balance of equities by promoting safety and security, with appropriate protections for civil rights and liberties, while allowing federal oversight of the national airspace, and allowing for appropriate drone use.

Accordingly, we urge you to include S. 1631 in the Senate FAA Reauthorization.

Sincerely,

Airlines for America
Airports Council International – North America
Alliance for Chemical Distribution (ACD)
American Association of Airport Executives
American Chemistry Council
American Correctional Association
American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturers
Association for Uncrewed Vehicle Systems International
Commercial Drone Alliance
DRONERESPONDERS Public Safety Alliance
IAAPA, The Global Association for the Attractions Industry
Interstate Natural Gas Association of America
Major Cities Chiefs Association
Major County Sheriffs of America
Major League Baseball

National Football League
Nuclear Energy Institute
Security Industry Association
U.S. Chamber of Commerce