MARCH 22, 2018

CONGRESS STEPS FORWARD TO ENHANCE PUBLIC SAFETY AND ENABLE FUTURE DRONE INNOVATION

[DISCUSSION DRAFT]

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. _____

To amend title 18, United States Code, to provide for certain authorized actions regarding interdiction of unmanned aircraft, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mrs. HARTZLER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To amend title 18, United States Code, to provide for certain authorized actions regarding interdiction of unmanned aircraft, and for other purposes.

REPRESENTATIVE VICKY HARTZLER PROPOSES COUNTER-UAS LEGISLATION THAT COULD REVOLUTIONIZE THE DRONE INDUSTRY

Jaz Banga, president and CEO of Airspace Systems and a member of FAA's Drone Advisory Committee, issued the following statement on the introduction of the Safeguarding ***America's Skies Act*** (HR 5366) by Representative Vicky Hartzler (R-MO):

"The potential of drones is truly limitless. But today, a hostile drone has the same protections as a 747. Our laws forbid public safety organizations and agencies like the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice from taking any action to intercept or at least neutralize threatening drones."

"Airspace was created to bring security and trust to the drone ecosystem, but the law is keeping some of America's best problem-solving technology sidelined. Today, only the U.S. Departments of Defense and Energy are authorized to use counter-UAS technology, and only in certain instances. No one else can—not the FBI, not the Border Patrol, not airport authorities or local law enforcement. That's all because our laws aren't keeping pace with innovation."

"The era of small drone innovation is just beginning. But before we begin to tap the real potential of smartly integrating drones into commerce or modernizing rules for hobbyists, there need to

be safeguards in place to deal with clueless, careless and criminal drone operators. Just like encryption paved the way for online shopping, security is an enabler of innovation."

"We applaud Representative Hartzler for introducing the Safeguarding America's Skies Act to proactively fix this national security disconnect. This legislation is one step toward correcting the larger problem of using 1926 and 1984-policy to govern drones in flight today."

In 2012, the Federal Aviation Administration ruled that drones met the legal definition of "aircraft." That makes almost every law on the books pertaining to "aircraft" apply to drones. United States Code Title 18, Section 32—which was written for passenger aircraft—says it is illegal to damage, destroy or interfere with an aircraft. So even if a drone is flying where it shouldn't be, or appears to be weaponized or smuggling cargo, it's technically illegal to do anything to interfere with the "aircraft" in flight.

In 2016, the bipartisan National Defense Authorization Act provided the Departments of Defense (DOD) and Energy (DOE) with an exemption from Title 18, so today DOD and DOE are able to utilize counter-drone tools and technology to protect specific military and energy property. Representative Hartzler's legislation, H.R. 5366, would extend that same exemption to the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security for the protection of U.S. citizens, infrastructure, and commerce.

Airspace Systems has been working with members of the United States Senate and the House of Representatives to help enable drone innovation through security. In collaboration with industry partners, Airspace Systems is paving the way for responsible drone use, while ensuring public safety and security for the U.S. public.

ABOUT AIRSPACE

Airspace Systems is the Silicon Valley-based creator of comprehensive autonomous drone defense systems. Founded in 2015 by a group of drone enthusiasts who early on, saw the tremendous benefits and risks of emerging UAS technology. Funded by early investors of Nest, Palantir, and Skype, their 30+ person team is harnessing the bleeding edge of artificial intelligence(AI), machine vision and deep-learning neural networks to defend against the most complex drone threats faced by public event venues, military personnel and law enforcement agencies. Airspace Systems is the only counter-drone company on the FAA's Drone Advisory Committee, charged with delivering US drone regulatory frameworks, and is a thought-leader on the use of AI and machine vision in defense applications.

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