

**NetChoice** *Promoting Convenience, Choice, and Commerce on The Net*

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January 25, 2017

The Honorable Vincent A. Sheheen  
South Carolina Senate  
504 Gressette Bldg.  
Columbia, SC 29201

RE: **Opposition to S 176 – Regarding the Regulation of drones**

Dear Sen. Sheheen,

We agree with the intent to install reasonable regulations regarding the use of drones. However, S 176 creates unintended consequences to legitimate personal and commercial uses of drones.

Instead of advancing S 176 as written we suggest you amend it so that it mirrors the “Unmanned Aircraft Systems Act” (UASA) discussed below.

Drones hold tremendous promise for businesses, professionals, and hobbyists. In areas like real estate, security, agriculture, architecture, engineering, and delivery, drones can provide significant commercial benefits to consumers and businesses in both rural and urban areas.

However, passing S 176 could prevent South Carolina residents from exploring many of these opportunities.

Fortunately, the US Department of Transportation is set to act on § 2209, which provides states and localities to petition the Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) to certify no-fly zones over things such as a Department of Corrections Facilities.

Clearly, the prohibitions in S 176 are unnecessary, and the bill’s unintended consequences will harm South Carolina businesses and citizens.

Instead of passing S 176 we suggest amending it to create clear rules for drone operators. We suggest replacing the existing bill text with the UASA based on existing Michigan Law ([SB 992](#) 2016).

The UASA, available at [NetChoice.org/DroneModel](http://NetChoice.org/DroneModel), enables the safe and lawful operation of drones by promoting accountability of operators, protecting privacy and property rights, and prescribing penalties for interference with first responders.

The UASA:

- Creates statewide standard allowing clarity for individuals and government.
- Recognizes licensing by FAA.
- Prohibits using a UAS to knowingly and intentionally:
  - Interfere with the official duties of first responders.
  - Harass, stalk, or violate restraining orders.

- Recording an individual in a manner that invades the individual's reasonable expectation of privacy.
- Creates a process to register locations as critical infrastructure.

While we ask that you not amend S 176, we welcome the opportunity to work with you on reasonable regulations that allow all to prosper.

Sincerely,



Carl Szabo

Senior Policy Counsel, NetChoice

*NetChoice is a trade association of e-Commerce and online businesses. [www.netchoice.org](http://www.netchoice.org)*