



April 7, 2016

Honorable Don Barrington, Chair
Senate Public Safety Committee
2300 N. Lincoln Blvd., Rm. 232
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

Dear Senator Barrington:

The undersigned companies represent hundreds of the country's leading technology companies in high-tech manufacturing, computer networking and information technology, clean energy, life sciences, internet media, ecommerce, education, and sharing economy sectors. Our member companies are committed to advancing public policies and private sector initiatives that make the U.S. the most innovative country in the world.

We respectfully urge you to amend HB 2599 a bill with the intent to regulate the use of unmanned aircraft above critical infrastructure facilities. On page 5, line 11 Section 9, the bill currently reads: "An operator of an unmanned aircraft that is being used for a commercial purpose, if the operator is authorized by the Federal Aviation Administration to conduct operations over that airspace." Our organizations appreciate the inclusion of this section, but do not feel that it adequately addresses existing federal authorities to operate an unmanned aircraft. We ask that you please remove the words "over that airspace" within this section as the language would conflict with federal aviation rules, could reduce air safety, and would deter commercial unmanned aerial systems (UAS) operators from flying in Oklahoma airspace.

The UAS industry will transform the way many of our companies do business. It will provide game-changing innovations including faster delivery of products such as life-saving diagnostic equipment and medicine. UASs are also used to improve crop production, and to make road, bridge and building construction and maintenance safer. They are spurring creation of innovative businesses and generating a host of new jobs. To that end, the safe integration of UASs into our transportation system is important as it will ultimately decrease the number of noisy vehicles on the road, reduce fuel consumption and lower carbon emissions.

Commercial UAS operators that are registered and approved by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to legally operate, must first abide by FAA restrictions on flight altitude, flight paths, operational bans and navigable airspace guidelines. Since the proposed flight ban would conflict with FAA rules, UAS operators will find themselves having to choose to either willfully ignore their ability to fly per FAA rules or ignore state law.

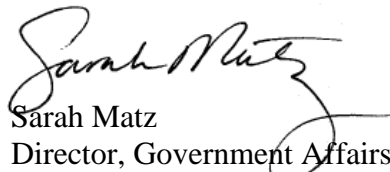
Congress gave the FAA sole authority to regulate commercial UAS operators on purpose. They recognized that one national entity must govern airspace to avoid substantial air safety problems that could ensue if state or local governments were allowed to adopt a “patchwork quilt” of differing flight restrictions. The FAA rules preempt state laws and they warn that enactment of conflicting state laws could severely limit flexibility and control of airspace and flight patterns as well as hinder their ability to ensure safe and efficient air traffic.

For all these reasons, we believe the phrase “over that airspace” should be stricken from the legislation as it promotes inefficient and unsafe operations of UAS flights, conflicts with FAA regulations that control navigable airspace and could force UAS operators into unsafe flight patterns. If allowed to become law, it will likely cause a reduction or elimination of UAS flights in Oklahoma.

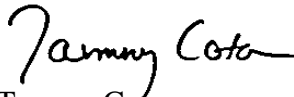
Sincerely,



John Doherty
Vice President and General Counsel
TechNet



Sarah Matz
Director, Government Affairs
Computing Technology Industry Association (CompTIA)



Tammy Cota
Executive Director
Internet Coalition



Carl Szabo
Policy Counsel
NetChoice

cc: Senate Public Safety Committee members