



Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Sam Graves  
Chairman

Rick Larsen  
Ranking Member

Jack Ruddy, Staff Director

Katherine W. Dedrick, Democratic Staff Director

October 21, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

The Honorable Michael G. Whitaker  
Administrator  
Federal Aviation Administration  
800 Independence Ave, SW  
Washington, DC 20591

Secretary Buttigieg and Administrator Whitaker:

We are writing to urge the Department of Transportation (DOT) and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to expeditiously implement key provisions of the *FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024* (P.L. 118-63) that will allow for scaled, safe beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) drone operations in United States airspace.

As you know, the *FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024* became law on May 16, 2024. Section 930 of the Act directed the FAA to establish a performance-based framework for BVLOS operations of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS).<sup>1</sup> This section requires the publication of a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) within four months of enactment and a final rule within twenty months of enactment.<sup>2</sup> The deadline to issue an NPRM has passed, and it is now our understanding that the proposed rule may not be issued until January 2025, at the earliest.<sup>3</sup> It is concerning the failure to comply with statutory instructions may also result in the delay of a final rule.

Providing a clear and predictable regulatory pathway for American innovators to integrate advanced UAS operations into the National airspace system is critical to ensuring safety and our competitive edge in this growing sector. The timely publication of a NPRM is a crucial first step to ensuring the agency has the benefit of public comment to craft a decisive, yet workable, final rule. Section 930 was included in the *FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024* in

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<sup>1</sup> *FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024*, Pub. L. No. 118-63, § 930.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Press Release, FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION, *FAA Drone and AAM Symposium Remarks*, (July 30, 2024), available at <https://www.faa.gov/speeches/faa-drone-and-aam-symposium-remarks>.

response to the current regulatory system of ad hoc, individual BVLOS waivers and exemptions. Although the FAA has recently worked to authorize more waivers and exemptions for critical BVLOS operations, the current process is not sustainable and has created complexity, delays, and fosters uncertainty which stifles innovation.<sup>4</sup>

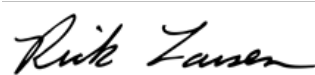
A final rule released in accordance with Section 930, will help unlock the full benefits of BVLOS operations across local communities and our National economy, including in the public safety, medical, logistics, and agricultural industries.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, a timely rulemaking will build on years of work by the FAA, the industry, conventional airspace users, and other stakeholders to ensure the necessary standards and processes are in place to safely foster advanced drone operations into United States skies.

The DOT and the FAA must work in a safe and expeditious manner to issue this critical rulemaking. We request that you notify us of any anticipated implementation delays, as well as how the Department will work expeditiously to address such delays. Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

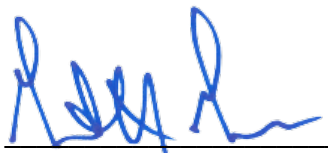
Sincerely,



Sam Graves  
Chairman  
Committee on Transportation  
and Infrastructure



Rick Larsen  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Transportation  
and Infrastructure



Garret Graves  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Aviation

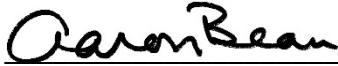


Steve Cohen  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Aviation

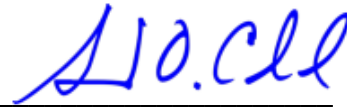
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<sup>4</sup> Press Release, FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION, *FAA Makes Drone History in Dallas Area*, (July 30, 2024), available at <https://www.faa.gov/speeches/faa-makes-drone-history-dallas-area>.

<sup>5</sup> James O' Donnell, *Artificial Intelligence: What's next for drones*, MIT TECHNOLOGY REVIEW, (Aug. 16, 2024), available at <https://www.technologyreview.com/2024/08/16/1096517/whats-next-for-drones/>.



Aaron Bean  
Member of Congress



Salud Carbajal  
Member of Congress



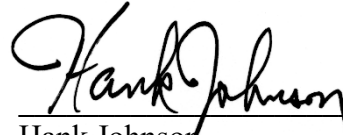
Andre Carson  
Member of Congress



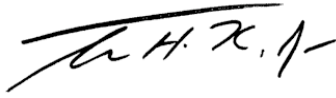
Eric A. "Rick" Crawford  
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress



Hank Johnson  
Member of Congress



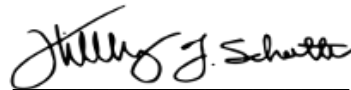
Thomas H. Kean, Jr.  
Member of Congress



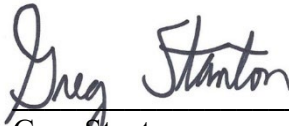
Robert Menendez  
Member of Congress

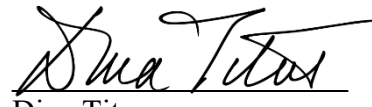


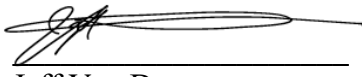
Marcus J. Molinaro  
Member of Congress




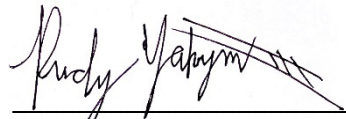
Hillary Scholten  
Member of Congress

  
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Greg Stanton  
Member of Congress

  
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Dina Titus  
Member of Congress

  
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Jeff Van Drew  
Member of Congress

  
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Frederica Wilson  
Member of Congress

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Rudy Yakym III  
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Shalanda Young, Director, Office of Management and Budget