
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 971 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY FOLMER, WHITE, WARD AND ALLOWAY, AUGUST 7, 2015

REFERRED TO STATE GOVERNMENT, AUGUST 7, 2015

AN ACT

1 Regulating unmanned aircraft in Pennsylvania.

2 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
3 hereby enacts as follows:

4 Section 1. Short title.

5 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Fourth
6 Amendment Protection Act.

7 Section 2. Definitions.

8 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
9 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
10 context clearly indicates otherwise:

11 "Amber Alert System." The system established under section
12 1(a) of the act of November 24, 2004 (P.L.1270, No.153),
13 referred to as the Pennsylvania Amber Alert System Law.

14 Section 3. General prohibition.

15 A State or local agency, including a law enforcement agency,
16 may not utilize an unmanned aircraft system before July 1, 2017.

17 Section 4. Permitted use.

18 Notwithstanding the prohibition under section 3, an unmanned

1 aircraft system may be deployed before July 1, 2017, in an
2 emergency or major disaster, when the Amber Alert System is
3 activated or during a search and rescue operation if the
4 deployment is necessary to protect life, health or property.

5 Section 5. Prohibition regarding weaponized aircraft.

6 (a) Prohibition.--Except as provided under subsection (b), a
7 weaponized unmanned aircraft system may not be deployed or its
8 use facilitated by a State or local agency or a member of the
9 public.

10 (b) Exceptions.--This section does not apply to the
11 following:

12 (1) The Pennsylvania National Guard in the following
13 circumstances:

14 (i) while utilizing a weaponized unmanned aircraft
15 system in its facilities during training required to
16 maintain readiness for its Federal mission;

17 (ii) when facilitating training for a Department of
18 Defense unit at its facilities; or

19 (iii) when the weaponized unmanned system is
20 utilized to support the Commonwealth for purposes other
21 than law enforcement, including damage assessment,
22 traffic assessment, flood stages and wildfire assessment.

23 (2) When the State or local agency has obtained a
24 warrant permitting the use of the weaponized unmanned
25 aircraft system.

26 Section 6. Effective date.

27 This act shall take effect immediately.