



THE FLORIDA SENATE
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President

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Legislation Protecting Private Property and Critical Infrastructure Moves to Senate Floor

Tallahassee—The Senate Committee on Rules, chaired by Senator Kathleen Passidomo (R-Naples) today passed Senate Bill 1422, Unmanned Aircraft or Unmanned Aircraft Systems, sponsored by Senator Keith Truenow (R-Tavares). The bill protects private property and critical infrastructure facilities by enhancing penalties for unauthorized drone usage.

“Floridians deserve peace of mind and a sense of privacy on their own property. Similarly, it is vital that we take steps to protect critical infrastructure facilities that provide energy to communities across our state,” said Senator Truenow. “This commonsense bill enhances penalties for bad actors who violate the property rights of Floridians and put the security of our infrastructure at risk.”

“As technology continues to evolve, the ways in which we protect Floridians and our state’s infrastructure must evolve with it,” said Senate President Ben Albritton (R-Wauchula). “Private property rights are a fundamental pillar of our American republic, and the Florida Senate is committed to protecting those rights and empowering Floridians to do the same.”

SB 1422 increases the criminal penalties from a second-degree misdemeanor to a third-degree felony if a person knowingly or willfully:

- Operates a drone over a critical infrastructure facility;
- Allows a drone to make contact with a critical infrastructure facility; or
- Allows a drone to come within a distance of a critical infrastructure facility that is close enough to interfere with the operations of or cause a disturbance to the facility.

Additionally, the bill specifies it is a third-degree felony for a person to knowingly or willfully:

- Possess or operate a weaponized drone;
- Alter, manipulate, tamper with, or otherwise change an unmanned aircraft or unmanned aircraft system’s hardware or software for certain purposes; or
- Possess or operate such an altered unmanned aircraft or unmanned aircraft system for certain purposes.

The bill creates a first-degree misdemeanor if a person knowingly or willfully uses a drone equipped with an imaging device to record an image of the tenant of privately owned real property, with the intent to conduct surveillance of the individual or property in violation of such

person's reasonable expectation of privacy. Additionally, the bill makes it a third-degree felony if a person intentionally distributes such surveillance.

The bill allows a person who has a reasonable expectation of privacy on his or her private property to use reasonable force to prohibit a drone from conducting surveillance, if the drone is operating under 500 ft. over the property.

For more information, please visit www.FLSenate.gov.

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