



**SMALL UAV
COALITION**
*A Partnership for
Safety & Innovation*

NEWS RELEASE

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Coalition Endorses Senate FAA Reauthorization Bill as Amended by Committee

UAS Subtitle Strengthened with Amendments Critical to Development of Comprehensive Regulatory Framework

WASHINGTON, DC – MARCH 16, 2016 – Today, the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee voted to send S. 2658, the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, to the Senate floor for consideration, as amended. During markup, the Committee adopted several amendments to improve the bill's unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) subtitle and the Small UAV Coalition is proud to endorse the legislation.

The Committee voted today to include an important amendment cosponsored by Senators Dean Heller (R-NV) and Maria Cantwell (D-WA) that provides for a new class of air carriers for companies. This amendment creates a necessary pathway to leverage small UAS technology to deliver products to consumers. The Coalition also strongly supports Senator Cory Booker's (D-NJ) amendment that establishes a micro UAS classification to provide for commercial operation of the smallest category of UAS (those weighing 4.4 pounds and under) on the same terms under which hobbyists have safely flown for years. The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee also adopted similar provisions with bipartisan support when marking up its FAA reauthorization legislation.

The managers' amendment offered by Chairman Thune (R-SD) and Ranking Member Nelson (D-FL) includes a provision that will enable broader UAS access to commercial mobile services and unlicensed spectrum, another vital component to safe and widespread integration of UAS.

As introduced, the legislation included several key provisions that represent major steps towards widespread UAS integration, including authorizing the Secretary of Transportation to grant exemptions for UAS operations beyond the visual line of sight (BVLOS) and at night, and an assertion that integrating routine BVLOS operations into the airspace should be a top priority for the FAA; a strong preemption provision consistent with an FAA [fact sheet](#) released last year which asserts that a "patchwork quilt" of state and local UAS regulations could lead to a "fractionalized airspace;" and an unmanned traffic management (UTM) pilot program that represents an important step towards implementation of UTM in low-altitude, uncontrolled airspace.

All of the provisions listed above will increase safety and accountability as the United States moves towards a regulatory framework that will expedite the integration of small UAS into the National Airspace System for commercial, recreational, and philanthropic purposes. The Coalition continues to have concerns over a section in the bill that would establish a process to develop consensus industry standards for approving the airworthiness of unmanned aircraft and technologies. While the Coalition supports risk-based standards, and the involvement of stakeholders in developing such standards, we believe this section raises several questions and can be improved.

The Coalition endorses S. 2638, as amended, and encourages Congress to enact FAA reauthorization legislation into law in the near term. Without a regulatory framework in place, the United States risks falling behind global competitors who are increasingly embracing the benefits of UAS.

The Small UAV Coalition commends the Committee for striving to protect both safety and innovation as it developed its UAS subtitle. We look forward to continuing to work with all members of Congress, the FAA, and the Administration to fully realize the vast economic potential of small UAS.

Small UAV Coalition members include Airmap, Amazon Prime Air, DJI, DroneDeploy, Google [X], GoPro, Intel, Kesyry, Parrot, PrecisionHawk, Verizon Ventures, 3D Robotics, AGI, Botlink, Flirtey, StratAero, and ZeroTech. For more information on the Small UAV Coalition, please visit www.smalluavcoalition.org, contact press@smalluavcoalition.org, or follow @smallUAVs on Twitter.

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