



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

March 4, 2020

Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE 20590

Honorable Steve Dickson
Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Avenue SW 20591

Re: Unmanned Aircraft System Assistance in Responding to Coronavirus Outbreak

Dear Secretary Chao and Administrator Dickson,

The Small UAV Coalition¹ urges you to use any existing authority to facilitate the use of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) to assist in the response to the outbreak of coronavirus (also known as COVID-19) in the United States. As you know, UAS have been used throughout the world to deliver blood, organs, and medical supplies, saving many lives by expediting the delivery of needed medicines and supplies. The Coalition believes that UAS may help deliver needed medicines and other medical supplies, as well as to deliver samples being used to develop a vaccine, even before a vaccine is developed for public use. In rural areas, drone delivery will enable prompt movement of necessary medicines and medical supplies. In metropolitan areas, drone delivery will avoid the gridlock during rush hours and traffic jams that clog cities periodically throughout the day.

In order for UAS to serve fully in this nationwide effort, they will need to be operated at night, over people, and beyond the visual line of sight. As you know, these operations may be done today only through a waiver granted under Part 107, although Part 107 does not allow package delivery operations for compensation or hire. The Coalition recommends you commit to: (1) expedite the consideration of waiver requests to assist in the response to coronavirus; (2) favorably consider such requests provided these operations are conducted safely; and (3) use the Administrator's statutory exemption authority in 49 U.S.C. 44701(f) to waive the prohibition on commercial UAS package delivery operations beyond the visual line of sight of the remote pilot in 14 C.F.R. 107.205(c).

¹ Members of the Small UAV Coalition are listed at www.smalluavcoalition.org.

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The Coalition has applauded the measures you have taken in the past to expedite granting authority to UAS operations to assist responding to emergencies like hurricanes and floods. The Coalition believes DOT and FAA should regard the coronavirus as a similar public emergency and use its existing authority to promote the use of UAS in support of our nation's response to this virus.

The Coalition and its members are willing to assist in any manner to help develop and promote the use of UAS to combat the spread of coronavirus.

Sincerely,



Gregory S. Walden
Aviation Counsel
Small UAV Coalition

Copy to:

Vice President Mike Pence

Chair, Coronavirus Task Force