

HCS HB 1619 -- USE OF DRONES OR UNMANNED AIRCRAFTS

SPONSOR: Van Schoiack

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Downsizing State Government by a vote of 8 to 4.

This bill prohibits an employee of a state agency or political subdivision, or any other person, from using a drone or unmanned aircraft over private property to photograph, film, create an image or livestream the property without the consent of the property owner unless he or she has probable cause.

This bill prohibits any person from using a drone or unmanned aircraft to photograph, film, videotape, or otherwise create an image of another person without the person's consent unless he or she is providing assistance to a law enforcement agency in cases involving state or national emergency, state or national security, or a missing person.

The provisions of this bill do not apply to a public utility, municipal utility or municipally-owned utility, joint municipal utility commission, or rural electric cooperative if the unmanned aircraft is used for:

- (1) The purpose of inspecting, repairing, or maintaining utility transmission or distribution lines or other utility equipment infrastructure.
- (2) Any work performed to any pipeline.

The provisions of this bill do not apply to federally certified pilots of unmanned aircrafts or drones in the normal course of business.

The provisions of this bill do not apply to law enforcement or public safety officials piloting or operating unmanned aerial vehicles, unmanned aircraft, or drones in the course of a response for public safety.

Any person in violation of these provisions will be guilty of a class A misdemeanor unless the person who created the image distributes the image to another person or transmits the image in a manner that allows access via computer or the person who created the image disseminates or permits dissemination by any means, in which case the person will be guilty of a class E felony.

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced

version of the bill.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that it stops an invasion of privacy and Government intrusion.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Van Schoiack and Arnie C. Ac Dienoff

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say insurance companies and some other companies use drones for land surveys and surveying damage after a storm.

Testifying on the bill were Ameren; Fire Service Alliance; Missouri Railroad Association; and the Missouri Insurance Coalition.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.