



Alliance for
Drone Innovation

March 10, 2020

U.S. Senator Ron Johnson, Chairman
U.S. Senator Gary Peters, Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
340 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Johnson and Ranking Member Peters:

The Alliance for Drone Innovation (ADI) writes in respectful opposition to S. 2502, the American Drone Security Act of 2019. This legislation, if enacted, would pose a serious threat to the U.S. drone industry by jeopardizing access to the global supply chain that U.S. companies rely upon.

If implemented, this bill would ban the procurement and operation of foreign-made drones by all federal agencies and would waste taxpayer dollars that have already been spent on independently-tested, secure drones with proven cost-saving benefits. Further, it would stymie federal innovation and prevent our government from using tools that are proven to be lifesaving and irreplaceable.

As the leading voice for manufacturers, suppliers, and software developers of professional and personal drones, ADI proudly supports policies that encourage the growth of the unmanned aircraft industry for personal, professional, educational, and governmental use – and we speak out against policies that would be harmful to our industry. ADI members are the nation's leaders and corporate visionaries who are responsible for creating the vibrant drone ecosystem of today, and who will lead us to the future applications of tomorrow.

On behalf of our membership, we stand in strong opposition to any and all country-of-origin bans. We know that closing off the U.S. market to the world does not isolate actual threats; it simply creates a false sense of security and leads to potentially devastating anti-competitive impacts on the drone economy. S. 2502 would force government operations to choose between fewer, less helpful and more expensive drone options, while creating a ripple effect of deleterious outcomes throughout the domestic drone industry. Indeed, given global supply chain realities, we believe products are not easily or widely available that are made without the drone components arbitrarily prohibited by S. 2502, risking a total shutdown of drone operations across the

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U.S. government, its contractors, and other beneficiaries of federal funding. These include state and local first responders, universities and colleges, and GI bill recipients.

Drones have proven their ability to save lives and help public safety all over the world, including rescuing at least 14 people in the states you represent. In Michigan, drones have helped find a 15-year-old girl stranded on an ice ledge in Holland, a lost teenager in Livingston County and a suicidal woman hiding in woods in Oakland County. In Wisconsin, drones have found five elderly people who wandered from their homes, four lost or injured hunters, and one person who tried to escape police by swimming in a cold river at night. In Sun Prairie, Wisconsin, a 57-year-old man suffering a medical episode was found critically injured in a field in the middle of the night, and local police said “[t]he thermal imaging drone was instrumental in finding this person alive.”

In order for U.S. companies to thrive and to enjoy access to the parts and components they need to build drones and their accessories, we ask you to reconsider this measure. ADI and our member companies share your concern about the safety and security of all Americans, but the American Drone Security Act of 2019 is not the answer. We welcome the opportunity to speak with you anytime about a solution that meets your goals yet preserves the global supply chain that is critical to the lifeblood of our companies.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jenny Rosenberg". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jenny Rosenberg
Executive Director
Alliance for Drone Innovation