

1 VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY — CHAPTER

2 *An Act to amend and reenact § 19.2-60.1 of the Code of Virginia, relating to use of unmanned aircraft*
3 *systems by public bodies; search warrant required; exception.*

4 [H 1482]

5 Approved

6 **Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**7 **1. That § 19.2-60.1 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**8 **§ 19.2-60.1. Use of unmanned aircraft systems by public bodies; search warrant required.**

9 A. As used in this section, unless the context requires a different meaning:

10 "Unmanned aircraft" means an aircraft that is operated without the possibility of human intervention
11 from within or on the aircraft.12 "Unmanned aircraft system" means an unmanned aircraft and associated elements, including
13 communication links, sensing devices, and the components that control the unmanned aircraft.14 B. No state or local government department, agency, or instrumentality having jurisdiction over
15 criminal law enforcement or regulatory violations, including but not limited to the Department of State
16 Police, and no department of law enforcement as defined in § 15.2-836 of any county, city, or town
17 shall utilize an unmanned aircraft system except during the execution of a search warrant issued
18 pursuant to this chapter or an administrative or inspection warrant issued pursuant to law.19 C. Notwithstanding the prohibition in this section, an unmanned aircraft system may be deployed
20 without a warrant (i) when an Amber Alert is activated pursuant to § 52-34.3; (ii) when a Senior Alert
21 is activated pursuant to § 52-34.6; (iii) when a Blue Alert is activated pursuant to § 52-34.9; (iv) where
22 use of an unmanned aircraft system is determined to be necessary to alleviate an immediate danger to
23 any person; (v) *by a law-enforcement officer following an accident where a report is required pursuant*
24 *to § 46.2-373, to survey the scene of such accident for the purpose of crash reconstruction and record*
25 *the scene by photographic or video images; (vi) by the Department of Transportation when assisting a*
26 *law-enforcement officer to prepare a report pursuant to § 46.2-373; (vii) for training exercises related to*
27 *such uses; or ~~(vi)~~ (viii) if a person with legal authority consents to the warrantless search.*28 D. The warrant requirements of this section shall not apply when such systems are utilized to support
29 the Commonwealth for purposes other than law enforcement, including damage assessment, traffic
30 assessment, flood stage assessment, and wildfire assessment. Nothing herein shall prohibit use of
31 unmanned aircraft systems for private, commercial, or recreational use or solely for research and
32 development purposes by institutions of higher education and other research organizations or institutions.33 E. Evidence obtained through the utilization of an unmanned aircraft system in violation of this
34 section is not admissible in any criminal or civil proceeding.35 F. In no case may a weaponized unmanned aircraft system be deployed in the Commonwealth or its
36 use facilitated in the Commonwealth by a state or local government department, agency, or
37 instrumentality or department of law enforcement in the Commonwealth except in operations at the
38 Space Port and Naval/Aegis facilities at Wallops Island.39 G. Nothing herein shall apply to the Armed Forces of the United States or the Virginia National
40 Guard while utilizing unmanned aircraft systems during training required to maintain readiness for its
41 federal mission or when facilitating training for other U.S. Department of Defense units.

ENROLLED

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