



SB-170 Unmanned aircraft systems: correctional facilities. (2015-2016)

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ENROLLED SEPTEMBER 08, 2015

PASSED IN SENATE SEPTEMBER 04, 2015

PASSED IN ASSEMBLY SEPTEMBER 03, 2015

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CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2015–2016 REGULAR SESSION

SENATE BILL

NO. 170

Introduced by Senator Gaines
(Coauthors: Senators Anderson and Bates)
(Coauthor: Assembly Member Gatto)

February 05, 2015

An act to add Section 4577 to the Penal Code, relating to unmanned aircraft systems.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 170, Gaines. Unmanned aircraft systems: correctional facilities.

Existing federal law, the Federal Aviation Administration Modernization and Reform Act of 2012, provides for the integration of civil unmanned aircraft systems, commonly known as drones, into the national airspace system by September 30, 2015. Existing federal law requires the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to develop and implement operational and certification requirements for the operation of public unmanned aircraft systems in the national airspace system by December 31, 2015.

Existing state law generally prohibits a person from bringing, possessing, distributing, or selling certain devices and substances, including, among other things, alcoholic beverages, controlled substances, and deadly weapons, in state prison or a jail. Existing

law also prohibits unauthorized communication with inmates in state prison or a jail. Existing law provides criminal penalties for violations of these provisions.

This bill would make a person who knowingly and intentionally operates an unmanned aircraft system on or above the grounds of a state prison or a jail guilty of a misdemeanor. The bill would make these misdemeanor provisions inapplicable to a person employed by the prison or jail acting within the scope of his or her employment, or a person who receives prior permission from the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation or the county sheriff. The bill would also make these misdemeanor provisions inapplicable to any entity that is authorized by the Federal Aviation Administration to use an unmanned aircraft system and operates it in accordance with the terms and conditions of the authorization. By creating new crimes, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: yes

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 4577 is added to the Penal Code, to read:

4577. (a) Except as provided in subdivisions (b), (c), and (d), a person who knowingly and intentionally operates an unmanned aircraft system on or above the grounds of a state prison or a jail is guilty of a misdemeanor.

(b) This section does not apply to a person employed by the prison who operates the unmanned aircraft system within the scope of his or her employment, or a person who receives prior permission from the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to operate the unmanned aircraft system over the prison.

(c) This section does not apply to a person employed by the jail who operates the unmanned aircraft system within the scope of his or her employment, or a person who receives prior permission from the county sheriff to operate the unmanned aircraft system over the jail.

(d) This section does not apply to any entity for which the Federal Aviation Administration has authorized the use of the unmanned aircraft system and the unmanned aircraft system is operated in accordance with the terms and conditions of the authorization.

(e) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) "Unmanned aircraft" means an aircraft that is operated without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the aircraft.

(2) "Unmanned aircraft system" means an unmanned aircraft and associated elements, including, but not limited to, communication links and the components that control the unmanned aircraft that are required for the pilot in command to operate safely and efficiently in the national airspace system.

SEC. 2. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution.