

HOUSE BILL 471

E4, D1
HB 954/25 – JUD

6lr0975

By: **Delegate Grammer**

Introduced and read first time: January 23, 2026

Assigned to: Judiciary

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Public Safety – State and Local Governments – Use of Unmanned Aircraft**

3 FOR the purpose of providing that certain evidence obtained through the use of an
4 unmanned aircraft is inadmissible in a criminal, civil, or administrative proceeding;
5 prohibiting a unit of State government or a political subdivision of the State from
6 deploying or operating an unmanned aircraft subject to certain exceptions;
7 prohibiting a unit of State government or a political subdivision of the State from
8 using certain information acquired through the use of an unmanned aircraft; and
9 generally relating to the use of unmanned aircraft by the State and by local
10 governments.

11 BY adding to
12 Article – Courts and Judicial Proceedings
13 Section 10–926
14 Annotated Code of Maryland
15 (2020 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

16 BY adding to
17 Article – Public Safety
18 Section 1–701 and 1–702 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 7. Use of Unmanned
19 Aircraft by State and Local Government”
20 Annotated Code of Maryland
21 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

22 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
23 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

24 **Article – Courts and Judicial Proceedings**

25 **10–926.**

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 ANY EVIDENCE OBTAINED THROUGH THE USE OF AN UNMANNED AIRCRAFT IN
2 VIOLATION OF § 1-702 OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY ARTICLE IS INADMISSIBLE IN ANY
3 CRIMINAL, CIVIL, OR ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEEDING.

4 Article – Public Safety

5 SUBTITLE 7. USE OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT BY STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

6 1-701.

7 (A) IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS
8 INDICATED.

9 (B) “AIRCRAFT” MEANS A DEVICE THAT IS USED OR INTENDED TO BE USED
10 FOR FLIGHT IN THE AIR.

11 (C) “UNMANNED AIRCRAFT” MEANS AN AIRCRAFT THAT IS OPERATED
12 WITHOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF DIRECT HUMAN INTERVENTION FROM WITHIN OR ON
13 THE AIRCRAFT.

14 1-702.

15 (A) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION, A UNIT OF
16 STATE GOVERNMENT OR A POLITICAL SUBDIVISION OF THE STATE MAY NOT:

17 (1) DEPLOY OR OPERATE AN UNMANNED AIRCRAFT FOR
18 SURVEILLANCE, EVIDENCE COLLECTION, OR ANY OTHER PURPOSE; OR

19 (2) USE INFORMATION ACQUIRED THROUGH THE USE OF AN
20 UNMANNED AIRCRAFT OPERATED BY ANY ENTITY, WHETHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE.

21 (B) A UNIT OF STATE GOVERNMENT OR A POLITICAL SUBDIVISION OF THE
22 STATE MAY DEPLOY OR OPERATE AN UNMANNED AIRCRAFT:

23 (1) IN ACCORDANCE WITH A VALID SEARCH WARRANT ISSUED BY A
24 JUDGE;

25 (2) AT A LOCATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF EXECUTING AN ARREST
26 WARRANT;

27 (3) IN FRESH PURSUIT OF A SUSPECT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-301
28 OF THE CRIMINAL PROCEDURE ARTICLE;

1 **(4) TO ASSIST IN AN ACTIVE SEARCH AND RESCUE OPERATION;**

2 **(5) TO LOCATE AN ESCAPED PRISONER;**

3 **(6) IF A LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER REASONABLY BELIEVES THAT**
4 **THE USE OF AIRCRAFT IS NECESSARY TO PREVENT IMMINENT SERIOUS BODILY**
5 **HARM TO AN INDIVIDUAL; OR**

6 **(7) IF THE UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF HOMELAND SECURITY**
7 **DETERMINES THAT CREDIBLE INTELLIGENCE INDICATES THAT THERE IS A HIGH**
8 **RISK OF A TERRORIST ATTACK BY A SPECIFIC INDIVIDUAL OR ORGANIZATION AND**
9 **THAT USE OF AN UNMANNED AIRCRAFT IS NECESSARY TO COUNTER THE RISK.**

10 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
11 October 1, 2026.