



Wes Moore | Governor  
Aruna Miller | Lt. Governor  
Harry Coker, Jr. | Acting Secretary of Commerce

**DATE:** March 6, 2025  
**BILL NO:** House Bill 1349  
**BILL TITLE:** Criminal Law - Unmanned Aircraft Systems - Trespass and Surveillance  
**COMMITTEE:** House Judiciary  
**POSITION:** Oppose

The Maryland Department of Commerce (Commerce) opposes House Bill 1349 – Criminal Law - Unmanned Aircraft Systems - Trespass and Surveillance

**Bill Summary:**

House Bill 1349 makes it a misdemeanor to fly an unmanned aircraft system onto another person's property, except when they have obtained consent from a person lawfully present on the property or when authorized by federal law or regulation.

**Background:**

For decades, Maryland has been at the leading edge in developing, testing, and introducing unmanned and autonomous systems (UAS). Maryland is home to a robust and rapidly growing ecosystem of developers in unmanned vehicles, artificial intelligence, and robotics. With a highly skilled workforce, unique supply chain, and an unparalleled concentration of federal, academic, and corporate customers, Maryland is the perfect launchpad for the next generation of autonomous systems. Researchers at the University of Maryland are leading the way in this field with applications across a wide variety of potential applications including disaster resilience, agriculture, search and rescue, and public safety and security.

**Rationale:**

House Bill 1349 sends a message to Maryland residents and the business community that unmanned aircraft are being used for nefarious purposes when in fact, they are indispensable tools for first responders, law-abiding citizens, and Maryland businesses. Laws and regulations are already in place to ensure the proper and safe use of UAS. Additional restrictions like these proposed through House Bill 1349 reduce public confidence in this essential technology and may even hinder public safety officials from effectively doing their jobs.

In order to grow Maryland's economy, Commerce is concentrating its efforts and resources in industry sectors we believe hold the greatest potential for growth and therefore return on the State's investment. The advanced air mobility industry presents growing opportunities for Marylanders, including employment, business investment, strengthened public safety services, and equitable access to services in urban and rural communities. For the industry to flourish, we need to draw attention to the legal and beneficial uses of unmanned aircraft systems. We do not need to further restrict and criminalize already illegal activity.

Commerce respectfully requests an unfavorable report on House Bill 1349.