



Representative Bernie Willis

74th House District

House Bill No. 77- Sponsor Testimony

May 9, 2023

Chairman Holmes, Ranking Member Baker, and Members of the House Aviation and Aerospace Committee: thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on H.B. 77. This legislation will establish requirements and prohibitions governing the operations of unmanned aerial vehicles in Ohio.

As you may be aware, Ohio is the birthplace of aviation. This is a distinction which we hold to the highest standard. It is only reasonable then that we act as the birthplace of the next generation of aviation taking the next steps into the air in the form of Advanced Air Mobility vehicles (flying cars). With this advancement in aviation, it is prudent to set standards and regulations to ensure safe and practical guidelines in the air. This legislation aims to act as the forefront of UAV standards and guidelines which drone and UAV operators must abide to.

Specifically speaking, this bill sets necessary private use prohibitions for persons operating UAV's.

- In a careless or reckless manner that endangers any person or property, or with willful or wanton disregard to others' rights or safety;
- If federal law or regulations prohibit its operation, unless the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has authorized the person to use the UAV;
- In a manner that interferes with the operations or activities of law enforcement, fire departments, or emergency medical services; and
- To photograph, record, or loiter over or near a critical facility in furtherance of any criminal offense.

This legislation additionally regulates local government use. It allows a municipal, township, or county to adopt ordinances, regulations or resolutions regarding the use and operation of UAV's owned and operated by the local government and the use and operation on public property. With the likes of both Honda and Intel making their way into Ohio, the use of drones will soar. This bill takes the necessary actions to facilitate this exciting frontier and ensures a safe sky.

Pending any further questions, this concludes my testimony for House Bill 77. Thank you for the opportunity to speak and I would be happy to take any questions.