



Representative Ty Mathews
House District 83

Technology and Innovation Committee, Sponsor Testimony on House Bill 317
September 30th, 2025

Chair Claggett, Vice Chair Workman, Ranking Member Mohamed, and members of the House Technology and Innovation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on House Bill 317.

This legislation confronts a serious and growing security concern: the widespread use of drones built by adversarial foreign governments, particularly the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation. These devices may seem like cost-effective tools, but their supply chains, ownership structures, and mandatory compliance with foreign intelligence laws create dangerous risks for Ohio.

Today, public entities across our state use drones for critical functions—monitoring power lines, inspecting bridges, documenting crime scenes, and assisting in emergency response. Every time these missions are conducted with drones tied to foreign adversaries, sensitive data about the condition, location, and vulnerabilities of our infrastructure can be exposed. Beijing and Moscow have consistently sought to exploit access points into American systems, whether through cyberattacks, intellectual property theft, or coercion of companies under their control.

House Bill 317 provides a prudent safeguard to address this challenge. It ensures that Ohio agencies, universities, and political subdivisions gradually transition away from drones manufactured by covered foreign entities, moving toward secure and trusted alternatives for their operations. **The bill includes a transition period until May 1, 2027, giving entities time to replace existing equipment and move toward secure, trusted alternatives.**

This is not about making drones harder to use—it's about ensuring that the information gathered does not end up in the hands of governments that seek to undermine the United States. By making this change, we not only protect our state and local operations, **but we also encourage the growth of American and Ohio-based drone manufacturers, creating secure options and strengthening our economy.**

House Bill 317 is a commonsense safeguard. It protects our infrastructure, limits foreign leverage over our technologies, and restores trust in public sector use of this fast-growing tool. I respectfully ask for your support. I look forward to your questions.