

As Introduced

136th General Assembly

Regular Session

2025-2026

H. B. No. 597

Representatives Sigrist, Mathews, T.

Cosponsors: Representatives Fischer, Williams, McNally, Brennan, Lett

To amend section 4561.50 and to enact section 1
4561.54 of the Revised Code to prohibit the 2
operation of unmanned aerial vehicles over 3
schools. 4

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:

Section 1. That section 4561.50 be amended and section 5
4561.54 of the Revised Code be enacted to read as follows: 6

Sec. 4561.50. As used in sections 4561.50 to ~~4561.53~~ 7
4561.54 of the Revised Code: 8

(A) "Critical facility" means any of the following: 9

(1) A critical infrastructure facility as defined in 10
section 2911.21 of the Revised Code; 11

(2) A commercial distribution center; 12

(3) A federal, state, county, or municipal court; 13

(4) A police station, sheriff's office, state highway 14
patrol station, or premises controlled by the bureau of criminal 15
identification and investigation; 16

(5) A federal, state, county, or municipal jail or prison 17

or any other facility in which persons are incarcerated; 18

(6) A federal or state military installation or facility; 19

(7) A hospital that receives air ambulance services. 20

(B) "Unmanned aerial vehicle" means a powered, aerial 21
vehicle to which all of the following apply: 22

(1) The vehicle does not carry a human operator and is 23
operated without the possibility of direct human intervention 24
from within or on the vehicle; 25

(2) The vehicle uses aerodynamic forces to provide lift; 26

(3) The vehicle can fly autonomously or be piloted 27
remotely; 28

(4) The vehicle is either expendable or recoverable. 29

"Unmanned aerial vehicle" is commonly referred to as a 30
drone and does not include a satellite. 31

(C) "Unmanned aerial vehicle system" means an unmanned 32
aerial vehicle and associated elements, including communication 33
links and components that control the unmanned aerial vehicle 34
and that are required for the remote pilot in command to operate 35
the vehicle in the air space over this state. 36

(D) "Park district" means a park district created in 37
accordance with Chapter 1545. of the Revised Code. 38

(E) "School" means all of the following: 39

(a) A city, exempted village, local, or joint vocational 40
school district; 41

(b) A community school established under Chapter 3314. of 42
the Revised Code; 43

(c) A science, technology, engineering, and mathematics 44
school established under Chapter 3326. of the Revised Code; 45

(d) A chartered nonpublic school; 46

(e) An educational service center, on behalf of a school 47
or district. 48

Sec. 4561.54. (A) No person shall knowingly operate an 49
unmanned aerial vehicle over a school. 50

(B) Division (A) of this section does not apply to any of 51
the following: 52

(1) A person under contract with or otherwise acting under 53
the direction of or on behalf of the federal government, the 54
state government, another governmental entity, or a law 55
enforcement agency; 56

(2) An operator of an unmanned aerial vehicle that is 57
being used for a legitimate commercial purpose, provided the 58
operator has obtained all required federal aviation 59
administration authorizations; 60

(3) A person who has the prior written consent of the 61
principal, vice principal, or school resource officer or peace 62
officer assigned to the school; 63

(4) A person who is younger than fourteen years of age. 64

(C) If the principal, the vice principal, or a school 65
resource officer or peace officer assigned to a school witnesses 66
the operation of an unmanned aerial vehicle over the school, the 67
principal, vice principal, or resource officer or peace officer 68
may temporarily take possession of the unmanned aerial vehicle 69
for the purpose of providing the unmanned aerial vehicle to a 70
local law enforcement agency as evidence of a violation of 71

division (A) of this section. 72

(D) (1) The court may dismiss a charge for a violation of 73
division (A) of this section if both of the following apply: 74

(a) The defendant is younger than seventeen years of age 75
at the time of the offense; 76

(b) The judge finds that, in committing the offense, the 77
defendant did not intend to use the unmanned aerial vehicle to 78
cause physical harm to another person or damage to school 79
property. 80

(2) Before dismissing a charge under division (D) (1) of 81
this section, the judge shall issue to the defendant a warning 82
and refer the defendant to an educational program on unmanned 83
aerial vehicle safety and aviation laws, the duration and 84
contents of which shall be established by the director of 85
transportation. 86

(E) Whoever violates division (A) of this section is 87
guilty of a minor misdemeanor on the first offense and a fourth 88
degree misdemeanor on each subsequent offense. 89

Section 2. That existing section 4561.50 of the Revised 90
Code is hereby repealed. 91