

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 15, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

Dear Speaker Johnson and Leader Jeffries:

In light of the recent incidents involving drones spotted over the eastern seaboard, we urge you to swiftly take action on counter-unmanned aircraft systems (C-UAS) legislation that will allow for state and local law enforcement to protect their communities from this emerging threat in the year end continuing resolution. In recent weeks, there has been a sudden surge in sightings of unknown drones over New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and other east coast states.¹ Although the Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security have claimed that there is not an immediate national security threat, senior officials from both departments have also been extremely clear in numerous appearances before Congress that the federal government does not have the resources to handle every drone threat alone.² In his own testimony to the Bipartisan Task Force on the Attempted Assassination of Donald Trump and the United States Senate Homeland Security Committee, Acting Director Rowe of the Secret Service has been clear that additional C-UAS legal authority for state and local law enforcement could have helped prevent the assassination attempt on President-Elect Trump.³

There are hundreds of thousands drones in the U.S. market alone, many of them unregistered with the FAA.⁴ These sort of incidents are likely to be come only more common, as will the number flights that do pose genuine threats to public safety. It is clearly time to end the blanket ban on the use of C-UAS technology by local law and state law enforcement to detect and mitigate drone threats, in favor of at least a limited pilot program that will allow the responsible use of these technologies throughout their jurisdictions in coordination with the FAA. There has been bipartisan legislation introduced in both the House and Senate that will address this emerging threat, including our bill [H.R.4333](#). It is essential that as you consider a year-end continuing resolution, that this package include an expansion of the current C-UAS authorities to allow local and state law enforcement to access these technologies.

Sincerely,



Chrissy Houlahan
Member of Congress



Andrew R. Garbarino
Member of Congress

¹ <https://apnews.com/article/drones-new-jersey-what-to-know-e6f565f5d51d9d47ad140e7e7d131842>

² <https://www.fbi.gov/news/press-releases/joint-dhs-fbi-statement-on-reports-of-drones-in-new-jersey>

³ https://www.youtube.com/live/OiyeDFRLKV4?si=huVoe_dF1T-CHbff

⁴ <https://homeland.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/2024-12-10-CTITMS-HRG-Testimony.pdf>