

House Engrossed Senate Bill
schools; prohibition; unmanned aircraft

State of Arizona
Senate
Fifty-seventh Legislature
Second Regular Session
2026

SENATE BILL 1627

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTION 13-3729, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; RELATING TO UNMANNED
AIRCRAFT.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

2 Section 1. Section 13-3729, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
3 read:

4 13-3729. Unlawful operation of model or unmanned aircraft;
5 classification; definitions

6 A. It is unlawful for a person to operate a model aircraft or a
7 civil unmanned aircraft if the operation:

8 1. Is prohibited by a federal law or regulation that governs
9 aeronautics, including federal aviation administration regulations.

10 2. Interferes with a law enforcement, firefighter or emergency
11 services operation.

12 B. It is unlawful for a person to operate or use an unmanned
13 aircraft or unmanned aircraft system to intentionally photograph or loiter
14 over or near a critical facility in the furtherance of any criminal
15 offense.

16 C. IT IS UNLAWFUL FOR A PERSON TO OPERATE OR USE AN UNMANNED
17 AIRCRAFT OR UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM TO INTENTIONALLY PHOTOGRAPH OR LOITER
18 TWO HUNDRED FEET OR LESS ABOVE A PROPERTY IF THE OPERATOR IS OPERATING THE
19 UNMANNED AIRCRAFT OR UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM FOR HOBBY OR RECREATIONAL
20 PURPOSES AND KNOWS OR REASONABLY SHOULD KNOW THAT ALL OF THE FOLLOWING
21 APPLY:

22 1. THE PROPERTY IS NOT ZONED FOR RESIDENTIAL USE.

23 2. THE PROPERTY IS USED TO PROVIDE INSTRUCTION TO STUDENTS IN
24 KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS OR IN ANY OF GRADES ONE THROUGH TWELVE WHEN SCHOOL
25 IS IN SESSION OR WHEN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ARE OCCURRING ON THE PROPERTY
26 OUTSIDE OF NORMAL SCHOOL HOURS.

27 3. THE PROPERTY OWNER OR A PERSON WHO HAS LAWFUL CONTROL OVER THE
28 PROPERTY HAS POSTED REASONABLE NOTICE PROHIBITING ENTRY ON OR OVER THE
29 PROPERTY.

30 4. A PEACE OFFICER, THE OWNER OF THE PROPERTY OR A PERSON WHO HAS
31 LAWFUL CONTROL OVER THE PROPERTY HAS NOTIFIED THE OPERATOR OF THE UNMANNED
32 AIRCRAFT OR UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM OF THE PROHIBITION AND GIVEN A
33 REASONABLE REQUEST TO LEAVE THE PROPERTY.

34 ~~C.~~ D. Except as authorized by law, a city, town or county may not
35 enact or adopt any ordinance, policy or rule that relates to the ownership
36 or operation of an unmanned aircraft or unmanned aircraft system or
37 otherwise engage in the regulation of the ownership or operation of an
38 unmanned aircraft or an unmanned aircraft system. Any ordinance, policy
39 or rule that violates this subsection, whether enacted or adopted by the
40 city, town or county before or after August 6, 2016, is void.

~~D.~~ E. This section does not:

1. Apply to a person or entity that is authorized or allowed by the federal aviation administration to operate or use an unmanned aircraft system if the person's or entity's operation or use complies with the authorization granted to the person or entity or with federal aviation administration rules.

2. Prohibit a city, town or county from enacting or adopting ordinances or rules on the operation or use of a public unmanned aircraft that is owned by the city, town or county.

3. Prohibit a city, town or county from enacting or adopting ordinances or rules that regulate the takeoff or landing of a model aircraft in a park or preserve owned by the city, town or county if:

(a) There are other parks or preserves that are within the city, town or county and that are available for model aircraft operation.

(b) The city, town or county only has one park or preserve that is within the city, town or county.

4. Apply to the operation of an unmanned aircraft, including a public unmanned aircraft, by a first responder as defined in section 36-661 while acting in the first responder's official capacity or an emergency worker while engaged in or supporting authorized emergency management activities or performing emergency functions pursuant to title 26, chapter 2.

F. SUBSECTION C OF THIS SECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO A PERSON WHO HAS LEGAL AUTHORITY OR ADMINISTRATIVE OVERSIGHT OVER THE PROPERTY OR WHO OBTAINS CONSENT FROM ANOTHER PERSON WITH LEGAL AUTHORITY OR ADMINISTRATIVE OVERSIGHT OVER THE PROPERTY.

~~F.~~ G. A violation of subsection B of this section is a class 6 felony, except that a second or subsequent violation is a class 5 felony. A violation of subsection A of this section is a class 1 misdemeanor. A VIOLATION OF SUBSECTION C OF THIS SECTION IS A CLASS 3 MISDEMEANOR.

~~F.~~ H. For the purposes of this section:

1. "Civil unmanned aircraft" means an unmanned aircraft or unmanned aircraft system that is operated by a person for any purpose other than strictly for hobby or recreational purposes, including commercial purposes, or in furtherance of or incidental to any business or media service or agency.

2. "Commercial purposes" means the use of an unmanned aircraft in return for financial compensation and includes aerial photography, aerial mapping or geospatial imaging.

3. "Critical facility" means any of the following:

(a) A petroleum or alumina refinery.

(b) A petroleum, chemical or rubber production, transportation, storage or processing facility.

(c) A chemical manufacturing facility.

1 (d) A water or wastewater treatment facility and water development,
2 distribution or conveyance system, including a dam.

3 (e) An electric generation facility, as defined in section
4 42-14156, and any associated substation or switchyard.

5 (f) An electrical transmission or distribution substation.

6 (g) An electrical transmission line of at least sixty-nine thousand
7 volts.

8 (h) An electronic communication station or tower.

9 (i) An energy control center.

10 (j) A distribution operating center.

11 (k) A facility that transfers or distributes natural gas, including
12 a compressor station, regulator station, city gate station or pressure
13 limiting station or a liquefied natural gas facility or supplier tap
14 facility.

15 (l) Any railroad infrastructure or facility.

16 (m) A federal, state, county or municipal court.

17 (n) A public safety or emergency operation facility.

18 (o) A federal, state, county or municipal jail or prison or other
19 facility in which persons are incarcerated.

20 (p) A federal or state military installation or facility.

21 (q) A hospital that receives air ambulance services.

22 4. "Model aircraft" ~~has the same meaning prescribed in section 336~~
23 ~~of the FAA modernization and reform act of 2012 (P.L. 112-95), as amended~~
24 MEANS AN UNMANNED AIRCRAFT THAT IS ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:

25 (a) CAPABLE OF SUSTAINED FLIGHT IN THE ATMOSPHERE.

26 (b) FLOWN WITHIN THE VISUAL LINE OF SIGHT OF THE PERSON OPERATING
27 THE MODEL AIRCRAFT.

28 (c) FLOWN FOR HOBBY OR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES.

29 5. "Person" means a corporation, firm, partnership, association,
30 individual or organization or any other group acting as a unit.

31 6. "Public unmanned aircraft" means an unmanned aircraft or
32 unmanned aircraft system that is operated by a public agency for a
33 government-related purpose.

34 7. "Unmanned aircraft" means an aircraft, including an aircraft
35 commonly known as a drone, that is operated without the possibility of
36 direct human intervention from within or on the aircraft.

37 8. "Unmanned aircraft system" means an unmanned aircraft and
38 associated elements, including any communication links and components that
39 control the unmanned aircraft.