



COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hearing Statement of Counterterrorism, Law Enforcement & Intelligence Subcommittee Ranking Member Seth Magaziner (D-RI)

Safeguarding the Homeland from Unmanned Aerial Systems

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proliferation of Unmanned Aircraft Systems has created a technological arms race between criminals who use UAS technology to plot acts of terror, traffic fentanyl and other illegal substances, and invade the privacy of ordinary Americans, and law enforcement agencies tasked with keeping our Homeland safe.

Both criminals and law enforcement agencies are innovating at a rapid rate, and it is important that the federal government keep up.

The time has come for Congress to expand the authority of federal, state and local law enforcement agencies to better utilize monitoring, tracking and signal jamming technologies to protect critical areas, including our borders, large public events, prisons and sensitive government facilities, while also ensuring the civil liberties of drone operators.

This is the goal of H.R. 8610, the “Counter-UAS Authority Security, Safety, and Reauthorization Act,” authored by Chairman Green and Ranking Member Thompson – which I am proud to have co-sponsored.

For years, DHS, DOJ, and other agencies have briefed this Committee on the threats posed by malicious and unauthorized drones.

We have seen drones shut down airports in this country and around the world. Major sporting events have been interrupted with players rushed from the field when unauthorized drones with unknown motives entered restricted airspace.

And just a few weeks ago, the FBI arrested a white supremacist in Tennessee who planned to use a drone with an explosive payload to attack the power grid.

However, it should also be said that drones are useful tools for many occupations and hobbyists—they can be used for photography, search and rescue, navigation, and agriculture. These positive aspects remind us that we must take a measured approach to this issue.

I look forward to hearing from today’s witnesses about how best to balance the benefits and risks of unmanned aerial systems. Moreover, I hope that this hearing will lay additional groundwork for getting H.R. 8610 over the finish line.

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Media contact: 202-225-9978