

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 2249

To amend title 18, United States Code, to impose criminal penalties for the unsafe operation of unmanned aircraft.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 5, 2015

Mr. WHITEHOUSE introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To amend title 18, United States Code, to impose criminal penalties for the unsafe operation of unmanned aircraft.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Drone Operator Safety
5 Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. UNSAFE OPERATION OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 2 of title 18, United
8 States Code, is amended—

9 (1) in section 31—

10 (A) in subsection (a)—

1 (i) by redesignating paragraph (10) as
 2 paragraph (11); and

3 (ii) by inserting after paragraph (9)
 4 the following:

5 “(10) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT.—The term ‘un-
 6 manned aircraft’ has the meaning given such term
 7 in section 331 of the FAA Modernization and Re-
 8 form Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note).”; and

9 (B) in subsection (b), by inserting “‘air-
 10 port’,” before “‘appliance’”; and

11 (2) by inserting after section 39A the following:

12 **“§ 39B. Unsafe operation of unmanned aircraft**

13 “(a) OFFENSE.—Any person who operates an un-
 14 manned aircraft in a manner that interferes with, or dis-
 15 rupts the operation of, an aircraft carrying 1 or more oc-
 16 cupants operating in the special aircraft jurisdiction of the
 17 United States shall be punished as provided in subsection
 18 (b).

19 “(b) PENALTY.—

20 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-
 21 graph (2), the punishment for an offense under sub-
 22 section (a) shall be a fine under this title, imprison-
 23 ment for not more than 1 year, or both.

24 “(2) SERIOUS BODILY INJURY OR DEATH.—The
 25 punishment for an offense under subsection (a) dur-

1 ing which the offender attempts to cause, or inten-
2 tionally or recklessly causes, serious bodily injury or
3 death shall be a fine under this title, imprisonment
4 for any term of years or for life, or both.

5 “(c) OPERATION OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT IN
6 FLIGHT PATH OF AIRPORT.—The operation of an un-
7 manned aircraft within the arrival or departure flight path
8 of any airport without the permission of the airport oper-
9 ator or airport traffic control tower shall be considered
10 a violation of subsection (a).”.

11 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
12 for chapter 2 of title 18, United States Code, is amended
13 by inserting after the item relating to section 39A the fol-
14 lowing:

“39B. Unsafe operation of unmanned aircraft.”.

○