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1 **HOUSE BILL NO. 950**

2 Offered January 14, 2026

3 Prefiled January 13, 2026

4 *A BILL to amend and reenact § 19.2-60.1 of the Code of Virginia, relating to use of unmanned aircraft*  
5 *systems by public bodies; search warrant required; exceptions.*

6 Patron—Lopez

7 Committee Referral Pending

8 **Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**9 **1. That § 19.2-60.1 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**10 **§ 19.2-60.1. Use of unmanned aircraft systems by public bodies; search warrant required.**

11 A. As used in this section, unless the context requires a different meaning:

12 "Unmanned aircraft" means an aircraft that is operated without the possibility of human intervention from  
13 within or on the aircraft.14 "Unmanned aircraft system" means an unmanned aircraft and associated elements, including  
15 communication links, sensing devices, and the components that control the unmanned aircraft.16 B. No state or local government department, agency, or instrumentality having jurisdiction over criminal  
17 law enforcement or regulatory violations, including ~~but not limited to~~ the Department of State Police, and no  
18 department of law enforcement as defined in § 15.2-836 of any county, city, or town shall utilize an  
19 unmanned aircraft system except during the execution of a search warrant issued pursuant to this chapter or  
20 an administrative or inspection warrant issued pursuant to law.21 C. Notwithstanding the prohibition in this section, an unmanned aircraft system may be deployed without  
22 a warrant (i) when an Amber Alert is activated pursuant to § 52-34.3; (ii) when a Senior Alert is activated  
23 pursuant to § 52-34.6; (iii) when a Blue Alert is activated pursuant to § 52-34.9; (iv) where use of an  
24 unmanned aircraft system is determined to be necessary to alleviate an immediate danger to any person; (v)  
25 by a law-enforcement officer, an employee of the Department of State Police, or an employee of a local  
26 law-enforcement agency following an accident where a report is required pursuant to § 46.2-373, to survey  
27 the scene of such accident for the purpose of crash reconstruction and record the scene by photographic or  
28 video images; (vi) by the Department of Transportation when assisting a law-enforcement officer to prepare a  
29 report pursuant to § 46.2-373; (vii) for training exercises related to such uses; (viii) if a person with legal  
30 authority consents to the warrantless search; (ix) by a law-enforcement officer or an employee of a  
31 law-enforcement agency to (a) aerially survey a primary residence of the subject of the arrest warrant to  
32 formulate a plan to execute an existing arrest warrant or capias for a felony offense or (b) locate a person  
33 sought for arrest when such person has fled from a law-enforcement officer and a law-enforcement officer  
34 remains in hot pursuit of such person; or (x) by a law-enforcement officer investigating unmanned aircraft  
35 systems surrounding or over property of the federal or state government, public critical infrastructure as  
36 defined in § 44-146.28:2, or nongovernment-operated prison or jail facilities; or (xi) by the *Department of*  
37 *Environmental Quality for the implementation and enforcement of Articles 2.2 (§ 62.1-44.15:20 et seq.), 2.3*  
38 *(§ 62.1-44.15:24 et seq.), and 2.4 (§ 62.1-44.15:51 et seq.) of Chapter 3.1 of Title 62.1.*39 D. The warrant requirements of this section shall not apply when such systems are utilized to support the  
40 Commonwealth or any locality for purposes other than law enforcement, including damage assessment,  
41 traffic assessment, flood stage assessment, and wildfire assessment. Nothing herein shall prohibit use of  
42 unmanned aircraft systems for private, commercial, or recreational use or solely for research and  
43 development purposes by institutions of higher education and other research organizations or institutions.44 E. Evidence obtained through the utilization of an unmanned aircraft system in violation of this section is  
45 not admissible in any criminal or civil proceeding.46 F. In no case may a weaponized unmanned aircraft system be deployed in the Commonwealth or its use  
47 facilitated in the Commonwealth by a state or local government department, agency, or instrumentality or  
48 department of law enforcement in the Commonwealth except in operations at the Space Port and Naval/Aegis  
49 facilities at Wallops Island. No weaponized unmanned aircraft systems shall be construed to include such  
50 systems designed and used for the purpose of disabling another unmanned aircraft system.51 G. Nothing herein shall apply to the Armed Forces of the United States or the Virginia National Guard  
52 while utilizing unmanned aircraft systems during training required to maintain readiness for its federal  
53 mission or when facilitating training for other U.S. Department of Defense units.

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