

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5315

To direct the Secretary of Transportation to establish in the Department of Transportation a drone infrastructure inspection grant program and a drone education and training grant program, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 21, 2021

Mr. STANTON (for himself and Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Transportation to establish in the Department of Transportation a drone infrastructure inspection grant program and a drone education and training grant program, and for other purposes.

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 Infrastructure
5 Inspection Grant Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. DRONE INFRASTRUCTURE INSPECTION GRANT**
2 **PROGRAM.**

3 (a) **AUTHORITY.**—The Secretary of Transportation
4 shall establish a drone infrastructure inspection grant pro-
5 gram to make grants to governmental entities to facilitate
6 the use of eligible small unmanned aircraft systems to in-
7 crease efficiency, reduce costs, improve worker safety, and
8 reduce carbon emissions related to the inspection, repair,
9 modernization, and construction of critical infrastructure.

10 (b) **USE OF GRANT AMOUNTS.**—Amounts from a
11 grant under this section may be used to—

12 (1) purchase or lease eligible small unmanned
13 aircraft systems;

14 (2) contract for services performed with an eli-
15 gible small unmanned aircraft system; and

16 (3) support the governmental entity’s small un-
17 manned aircraft system program’s management ca-
18 pability.

19 (c) **ELIGIBILITY.**—To be eligible to receive a grant
20 under this section, a governmental entity shall submit an
21 application to the Secretary at such time, in such form,
22 and containing such information as the Secretary may re-
23 quire.

24 (d) **SELECTION OF APPLICANTS.**—In the selection of
25 applicants for grants under this section, the Secretary
26 shall prioritize projects that propose to—

1 (1) use the grant for critical infrastructure
2 projects in historically disadvantaged communities;
3 or

4 (2) address a significant safety risk in critical
5 infrastructure inspection, maintenance, rehabilita-
6 tion, or construction projects.

7 (e) REPORT TO CONGRESS.— Not later than 1 year
8 after the first grant awards are made under this Act, the
9 Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Transpor-
10 tation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives
11 and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transpor-
12 tation of the Senate a report that evaluates the program
13 carried out under this section, including—

14 (1) a description of the number of grants
15 awarded;

16 (2) the amount of each grant;

17 (3) the activities funded under this section; and

18 (4) the effectiveness of such funded activities in
19 meeting the objectives described in subsection (a).

20 (f) FUNDING.—

21 (1) FEDERAL SHARE.—

22 (A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in
23 subparagraph (B), the Federal share of the cost
24 of a project carried out using a grant under

1 this section shall not exceed 80 percent of the
2 total project cost.

3 (B) WAIVER.—The Secretary may increase
4 the Federal share requirement under subpara-
5 graph (A) to up to 100 percent for a project
6 carried out using a grant under this section by
7 a governmental entity if such entity—

8 (i) submits a written application to
9 the Secretary requesting an increase in the
10 Federal share; and

11 (ii) demonstrates, to the Secretary’s
12 satisfaction, that the additional assistance
13 is necessary to facilitate the acceptance
14 and full use of a grant under this section,
15 such as alleviating economic hardship,
16 meeting additional workforce needs, or
17 such other uses that the Secretary deter-
18 mines to be appropriate.

19 (2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—
20 There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out
21 this section—

22 (A) \$50,000,000 for fiscal year 2022; and

23 (B) \$50,000,000 for fiscal year 2023.

24 (g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1 (1) CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE.—The term
2 “critical infrastructure” has the meaning given the
3 term in section 1016(e) of the Critical Infrastruc-
4 tures Protection Act of 2001 (42 U.S.C. 5195c(e))
5 that is a bridge, road, dam, electric grid infrastruc-
6 ture, water infrastructure, or other related infra-
7 structure.

8 (2) ELIGIBLE SMALL UNMANNED AIRCRAFT
9 SYSTEM.—The term “eligible small unmanned air-
10 craft system” means a small unmanned aircraft sys-
11 tem that is manufactured or assembled by a com-
12 pany domiciled in the United States that is not sub-
13 ject to influence or control by the Government of the
14 People’s Republic of China.

15 (3) GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY.—The term “gov-
16 ernmental entity” means—

17 (A) a State or political subdivision thereof;

18 (B) a unit of local government;

19 (C) a Tribal government,

20 (D) a metropolitan planning organization;

21 or

22 (E) a combination of the entities in sub-
23 paragraphs (A) through (D) in a region or geo-
24 graphic area.

1 (4) SMALL UNMANNED AIRCRAFT; UNMANNED
 2 AIRCRAFT; UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM.—The
 3 terms “small unmanned aircraft”, “unmanned air-
 4 craft”, and “unmanned aircraft system” have the
 5 meanings given such terms in section 44801 of title
 6 49, United States Code.

7 (5) STATE.—The term “State” means each
 8 State, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the
 9 Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the
 10 Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

11 **SEC. 3. DRONE EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE TRAINING**
 12 **GRANT PROGRAM.**

13 (a) AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of Transportation
 14 shall establish a drone education and training grant pro-
 15 gram to make grants to educational institutions for work-
 16 force training for small unmanned aircraft system tech-
 17 nology.

18 (b) USE OF GRANT AMOUNTS.—Amounts from a
 19 grant under this section shall be used in furtherance of
 20 activities authorized under sections 631 and 632 of the
 21 FAA Reauthorization Act 2018 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note).

22 (c) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive a grant
 23 under this section, an educational institution shall submit
 24 an application to the Secretary at such time, in such form,

1 and containing such information as the Secretary may re-
2 quire,

3 (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
4 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this sec-
5 tion—

6 (1) \$50,000,000 for fiscal year 2022; and

7 (2) \$50,000,000 for fiscal year 2023.

8 (e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

9 (1) EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION.—The term
10 “educational institution” means an institution of
11 higher education as defined in section 101 of the
12 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)
13 that—

14 (A) is designated by the Secretary of
15 Transportation as a Community and Technical
16 College Center of Excellence in Small Un-
17 manned Aircraft System Technology Training
18 under section 631(a) of the FAA Reauthoriza-
19 tion Act of 2018 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note); or

20 (B) has an agreement in effect with the
21 Administrator of the Federal Aviation Adminis-
22 tration under the collegiate training initiative
23 program relating to unmanned aircraft systems
24 under section 632 of the FAA Reauthorization
25 Act of 2018 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note).

1 (2) SMALL UNMANNED AIRCRAFT; UNMANNED
2 AIRCRAFT; UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM.—The
3 terms “small unmanned aircraft”, “unmanned air-
4 craft”, and “unmanned aircraft system” have the
5 meanings given such terms in section 44801 of title
6 49, United States Code.

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