

119TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 3598

To amend title 49, United States Code, to establish a pilot program for small, nonlethal deescalation unmanned aircraft to be used for law enforcement and public safety, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 23, 2025

Mr. NEHLS (for himself, Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina, Mr. FINSTAD, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Ms. BOEBERT, Mr. STAUBER, Mr. MOORE of Alabama, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. WIED, and Ms. MALOY) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

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## A BILL

To amend title 49, United States Code, to establish a pilot program for small, nonlethal deescalation unmanned aircraft to be used for law enforcement and public safety, 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 “Deescalation Drone  
5   Pilot Program Act of 2025”.

1 **SEC. 2. SMALL UNMANNED AIRCRAFT PILOT PROGRAM**  
2 **FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AND PUBLIC SAFE-**  
3 **TY.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448 of title 49, United  
5 States Code, is amended by adding at the end the fol-  
6 lowing:

7 **“§ 44815. Small unmanned aircraft pilot program for**  
8 **law enforcement and public safety**

9 “(a) PROHIBITION REGARDING WEAPONS.—The pro-  
10 hibition regarding unmanned aircraft armed with dan-  
11 gerous weapons under section 363 of the FAA Reauthor-  
12 ization Act of 2018 (49 U.S.C. 44802 note) is reaffirmed.

13 “(b) PILOT PROGRAM.—

14 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 months  
15 after the date of enactment of this section, the Ad-  
16 ministrator of the Federal Aviation Administration  
17 shall establish a deescalation drone pilot program to  
18 review the potential use of nonlethal deescalation un-  
19 manned aircraft by Federal, State, local, or Tribal  
20 law enforcement responding to an active shooter  
21 event.

22 “(2) CONTENTS.—The pilot program required  
23 under paragraph (1) shall—

24 “(A) address the process of reviewing and  
25 validating nonlethal weapons that may be af-  
26 fixed to an unmanned aircraft;

1           “(B) address training protocols for law en-  
2           forcement and agents of the Administration for  
3           the use of nonlethal deescalation unmanned air-  
4           craft;

5           “(C) address operational and safety proto-  
6           cols for operators of nonlethal deescalation un-  
7           manned aircraft and agencies directly over-  
8           seeing the operation of such unmanned aircraft;  
9           and

10          “(D) assess the efficacy of nonlethal dees-  
11          calation unmanned aircraft in indoor active  
12          shooter events and the safety benefits associ-  
13          ated with increasing the safe engagement dis-  
14          tance between a law enforcement officer and an  
15          active shooter.

16          “(3) PARTNERSHIPS.—In carrying out the pilot  
17          program under this subsection, the Administrator  
18          shall use existing partnerships with the unmanned  
19          aircraft system test ranges designated under section  
20          44803, in collaboration with Federal, State, and  
21          large metropolitan area law enforcement.

22          “(4) INTERAGENCY AVIATION AGREEMENTS.—  
23          The Administrator may enter into interagency avia-  
24          tion agreements, as necessary, with the Department  
25          of Justice, the Department of Homeland Security,

1 and State large metropolitan and rural law enforce-  
2 ment agencies to support the pilot program under  
3 this subsection.

4 “(5) CONSULTATION.—The Administrator shall  
5 solicit input from, and coordinate with, relevant  
6 stakeholders as appropriate in carrying out the pilot  
7 program established under this subsection.

8 “(6) REPORT.—Not later than 3 months after  
9 the conclusion of the pilot program, the Adminis-  
10 trator shall submit to the Committee on Transpor-  
11 tation and Infrastructure of the House of Represent-  
12 atives a report on the results of the pilot program  
13 that includes a plan outlining a proposed process  
14 through which a law enforcement applicant to such  
15 program may seek permission from the Adminis-  
16 trator to operate nonlethal deescalation unmanned  
17 aircraft.

18 “(c) RULEMAKING.—Not later than 60 days after  
19 submitting the report required under subsection (b)(6),  
20 the Administrator shall initiate a rulemaking to create a  
21 process through which the Administrator may provide ap-  
22 proval—

23 “(1) for Federal, State, local, or Tribal law en-  
24 forcement to operate nonlethal deescalation un-  
25 manned aircraft during an active shooter event; and

1           “(2) for manufacturers of nonlethal deescala-  
2           tion unmanned aircraft to operate such devices for  
3           testing, validation, and law enforcement demonstra-  
4           tions.

5           “(d) MANUFACTURING REQUIREMENT.—Any non-  
6           lethal deescalation unmanned aircraft used under the pilot  
7           program shall be manufactured in the United States, as  
8           defined by the Federal Trade Commission under part 323  
9           of title 16, Code of Federal Regulations.

10          “(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

11           “(1) ACTIVE SHOOTER EVENT.—The term ‘ac-  
12           tive shooter event’ means an event in which—

13                   “(A) an individual is actively engaged in  
14                   unlawfully killing or attempting to kill people  
15                   using explosives as defined under chapter 40 of  
16                   title 18, United States Code, or weapons sub-  
17                   ject to chapter 44 of title 18 or chapter 53 of  
18                   the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;

19                   “(B) responding to the event poses a sig-  
20                   nificant risk to human life, including the lives  
21                   of law enforcement personnel and other individ-  
22                   uals; and

23                   “(C) absent an immediate use of force, the  
24                   individual described in subparagraph (A) would  
25                   continue posing a threat to human life.

1           “(2) NONLETHAL DEESCALATION UNMANNED  
2       AIRCRAFT.—The term ‘nonlethal deescalation un-  
3       manned aircraft’ means an unmanned aircraft oper-  
4       ated by law enforcement that—

5           “(A) is only equipped or armed with 1 or  
6       more nonlethal weapons, including those that  
7       may be subject to the definition provided in sec-  
8       tion 930(g)(2) of title 18, United States Code;  
9       and

10          “(B) may be equipped with other nonlethal  
11       devices, including intense sound distraction  
12       emitters, cameras, targeting sensors, speakers,  
13       strobe lights and other similar collateral equip-  
14       ment.

15          “(3) NONLETHAL WEAPON.—The term ‘non-  
16       lethal weapon’ means a weapon, device, or munition  
17       that—

18          “(A) is explicitly designed and primarily  
19       employed to immediately incapacitate targeted  
20       individuals or property in the target area while  
21       minimizing—

22               “(i) fatalities;

23               “(ii) permanent injury to individuals;

24               and

1 “(iii) undesired damage to property;

2 and

3 “(B) is intended to have reversible effects

4 on individuals and property.”.

5 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chap-

6 ter 448 of title 49, United States Code, is amended by

7 adding at the end the following:

“‘44815. Small unmanned aircraft pilot program for law enforcement and public  
safety.’”.

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